DIGITAL HERO #28
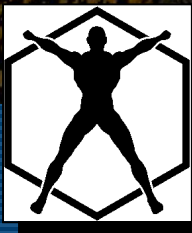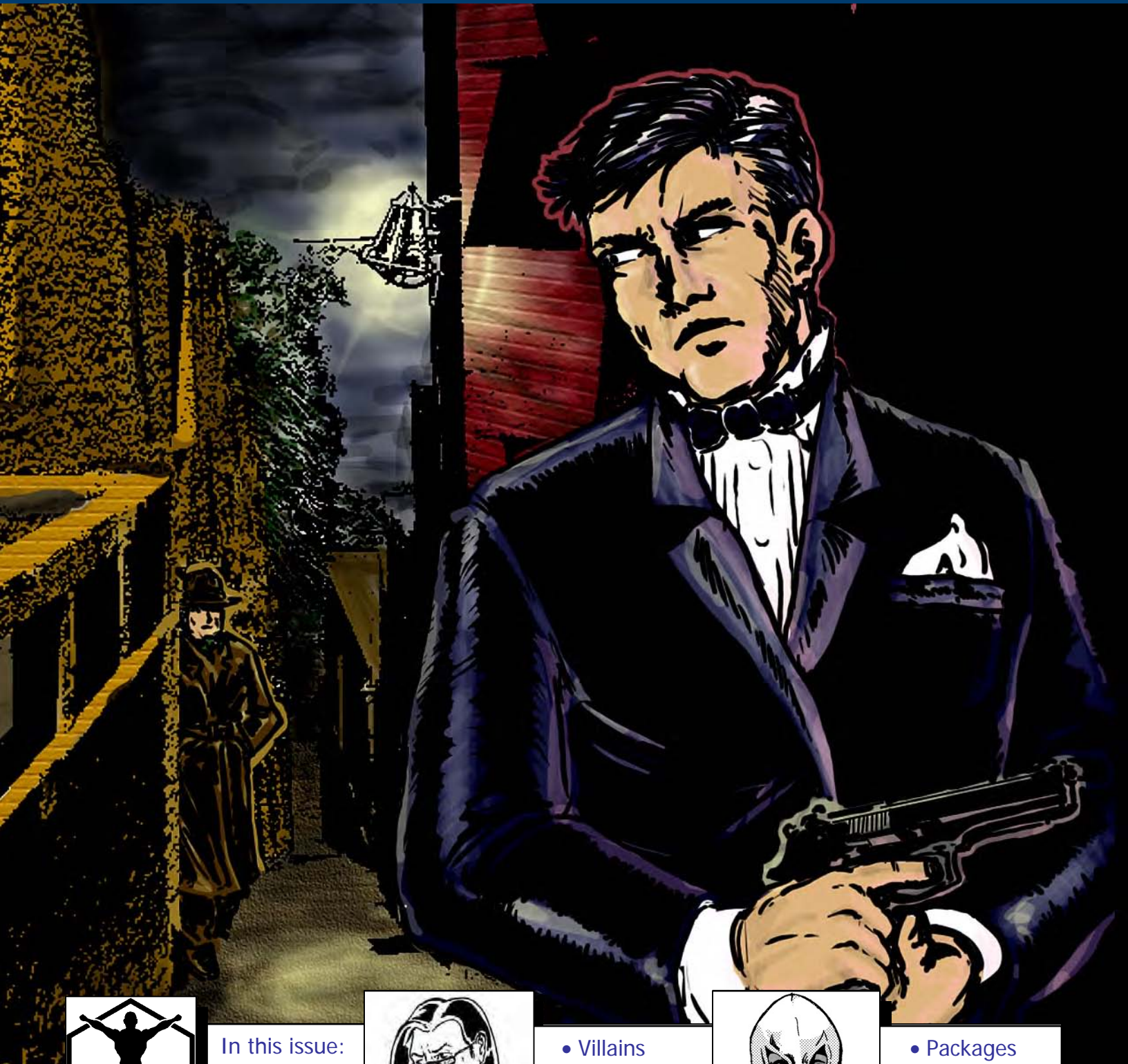
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When Last We Left Our Heroes...

by Steven S. Long

Time for some major acts o' evil!

This month Hero's coming out with a book that many fans have expressed eager anticipation for since it was announced a year ago: *Villainy Amok,* by Scott Bennie. The latest addition to our *Champions* line, *Amok* looks at several of the classic superhero adventures, scenarios, and plots in detail. When used by an unimaginative GM, staples like "the bank robbery" and "scientific experiment gone awry" become formulaic and boring – but when a smart GM gets ahold of 'em, these adventures are a vehicle to provide fun tactical challenges, advance more complex plots, and offer players opportunities for cool character bits. *Villainy Amok* is all about using these classics smartly. Genre staples speak to the heart of comic book superheroics, so they *should* be used a lot... but not in such a way that they become repetitive and dull. if it's used well, there's no reason that "the same old plot" has to be "the same old *tired* plot" – after all, millions of people watch action movies, even though they're pretty formulaic, because a well-done action movie uses those tropes smartly and thus provides an emotionally satisfying experience.

Villainy Amok is about basic superhero scenarios… and how to twist them so the players don't moan "Not another bank robbery!" when they see the GM start to draw the First Federal Savings and Loan on your battlemat. Like other *HERO System* products, it's a toolkit: it's designed to help the GM build interesting, challenging scenarios as quickly or as painstakingly as he wants. If he prefers, each chapter has a random scenario generator with which he can roll up a scenario, then flesh it out to suit.

Each chapter of *Villainy Amok* is dedicated to a different classic scenario. Chapter One, *Hands In The Air!* covers that perennial favorite, the bank robbery.

Chapter Two, *The Threat From Beyond,* deals with the alien probe attack – the initial thrust of an alien invasion. Dealing with an entire invasion would require an entire book, but if your heroes do their job, there won't be any need to run the whole invasion anyway. ;)

Chapter Three, *Ask Your Doctor If Metatron Is Right For You,* features the drug that gives people instant superpowers... but with terrible side effects. Better living through chemistry? Let your heroes be the judge!

Chapter Four, *Burn Baby Burn!,* covers the building fire scenario (to a lesser extent, the advice and suggestions it offers could apply to any "disaster" adventure). It includes advanced rules for how fire behaves and affects characters, for GMs who want to know exactly how fast a blaze spreads and what smoke inhalation can do to an unprepared PC.

Chapter Five, *It Came From A Mad Scientist's Lab,* reviews everyone's favorite chestnut, the scientific experiment gone awry. Whether it's a monstrous creation that somehow escapes or a backfiring experiment that gives the scientist weird powers, supertech labs are a font of scenario ideas.

Chapter Six, *Honey, I Shrunk The Superheroes,* is the comic book version of the movie *Fantastic Voyage.* The heroes, shrunk down to microscopic size, have to journey into someone's body, or some other unusual location, to save a life or resolve a problem. Alternately, maybe they get transformed into little kids or tiny animals for some strange adventure. This chapter includes expanded rules for Shrinking (you, too, can be only 1 nanometer tall for a mere 310 points!) and for the effects of combat at teeny-tiny sizes.

Chapter Seven, *My Big Fat Caped Wedding,* discusses the social event of the season – a superhero wedding! While the bride and groom just want to tie the knot, the hordes of their enemies have other ideas….

Chapter Eight, *The Plot Gallery,* provides an enormous number of plot hooks, twists, and other suggestions to help you work the PCs into the scenarios described in this book… not to mention many, many others. It includes plot seeds specifically involving such things as starting a campaign, DNPCs, secret identities, and social occasions.

The concluding section of the book is an appendix containing character sheets for the two new villains described in the book: the Engineer, a woman who's a strange mix of the organic and the technological; and the solar-powered Invictus.

Except for Chapter Eight, each chapter in *Villainy Amok* includes more than just a summary of the adventure type and what you can do with it. It also features sample NPCs, Package Deals or templates (if appropriate), and a short example scenario that you can run as-is or change to better fit your campaign. As noted on the back cover, the scenarios in *Villainy Amok* are designed for use with characters from the *Conquerors, Killers, And Crooks* and the *Champions* sourcebooks, but you can easily substitute other villains if you prefer.

So tell your PCs to get ready. The villains are about to run *Amok,* and only the bravest and boldest heroes will be able to stop them!

— Steven S. Long
HERO System Line Developer

HEROglyphs by Steven S. Long

Reductio Ad Absurdum

EXPANDING DAMAGE REDUCTION

As has often been stated, the *HERO System* has few absolutes. There's no guaranteed way to hit a target (except for Damage Shield, which only applies in restricted circumstances), no universal defense to attacks (or a specific form of attack), or the like. At the risk of descending into cliché, I think this is a feature, not a bug. In dramatic storytelling, true "absolutes" rarely exist, and in a gaming context (as opposed to a novel, comic book, or movie, where the author/ creator controls the main characters), they're likely to create far more difficulties than benefits.

Nevertheless, many gamers, having played other roleplaying games where absolutes (of one type or another) are allowed, sometimes get frustrated that the *HERO System* doesn't have absolutes itself. There are ways to work around this, as discussed in *Fantasy Hero,* but some gamers want more. As a fun rules experiment, this column looks into an optional rule for one type of absolute – absolute defense. To do that, I'm going to expand the rules for the Power *Damage Reduction,* which for many gamers is as close as the *HERO System* comes to "invulnerability."

As described in the *HERO System 5th Edition, Revised* rulebook, Damage Reduction works by decreasing the percentage of damage a character takes from an attack after applying his other defenses. The most powerful form of Damage Reduction decreases damage taken by 75%, so that the character only takes one-fourth of the damage done to him after defenses. To bring Damage Reduction closer to Invulnerability, all that's necessary is to expand the Damage Reduction rules a little, as shown in the table below.

The way these expanded Damage Reduction rules work, each doubling of cost means that a character takes approximately half as much damage after defenses as a character with the next worst level of Damage Reduction. The mathematical curve isn't precise, since it's easier to round off a bit here and there to make things work more smoothly in game play and keep the costs from becoming too high.

Even using these rules, with the enormous costs for high levels of Damage Reduction, the GM should consider requiring characters to restrict their Damage Reduction to a single special effect of damage (*e.g.,* the power only works against Fire damage, Sonic damage, Electricity damage, or what have you) as a default – which is to say, for no Limitation value. Allowing a character to have high levels of Damage Reduction that applies to all Physical, all Energy, or all Mental damage could pose significant game balance problems.

EXPANDED DAMAGE REDUCTION TABLE I			
Damage Reduction	**Normal Cost**	**Resistant Cost**	**Percentage of Damage Taken After Defenses**
25% Damage Reduction	10 points	15 points	75% (three-fourths)
50% Damage Reduction	20 points	30 points	50% (one-half)
75% Damage Reduction	40 points	60 points	25% (one-fourth)
88% Damage Reduction	80 points	120 points	12% (one-eighth)
95% Damage Reduction	160 points	240 points	6% (one-sixteenth)
100% Damage Reduction	320 points	480 points	0%

GREATER GRANULARITY

"Granularity" is a game design term that refers to the level of detail a system allows you to simulate. The *HERO System* is more granular than most games, but not nearly as granular as others. In the context of Damage Reduction, greater granularity means more options for reducing damage – not just the usual 25%, 50%, 75%, and so on. The table below provides an example of the cost structure and effects of more granular Damage Reduction.

EXPANDED DAMAGE REDUCTION TABLE II

Damage Reduction	Normal Cost	Resistant Cost	Percentage of Damage Taken After Defenses
10% Damage Reduction	5 points	7 points	90% (nine-tenths)
18% Damage Reduction	7 points	11 points	82% (five-sixths)
25% Damage Reduction	10 points	15 points	75% (three-fourths)
33% Damage Reduction	15 points	22 points	67% (two-thirds)
50% Damage Reduction	20 points	30 points	50% (one-half)
67% Damage Reduction	30 points	45 points	33% (one-third)
75% Damage Reduction	40 points	60 points	25% (one-fourth)
82% Damage Reduction	60 points	90 points	18% (one-sixth)
88% Damage Reduction	80 points	120 points	12% (one-eighth)
92% Damage Reduction	120 points	180 points	8% (three-twelfth)
95% Damage Reduction	160 points	240 points	6% (one-sixteenth)
100% Damage Reduction	320 points	480 points	0%

You Gotta Have Character by Jason Walters

"Life is lived forwards, but understood backwards." — Kierkegaard

"He's not only a wrestler; he's kind of a crimefighter." — Cop, in *Santo vs. the Zombies*

"El Santo is frustrated with this man who has hit him with fists and knees and who has stung his eyes!" — Arena Mexico announcer, during fight with The White Angel

"The limits of science go beyond those of mystery." — Professor Cristaldi, *El Santo and Blue Demon vs. Dracula and the Wolf Man*

El Santo leaned casually against the polished oak bar in one of the most fashionable nightclubs in downtown Mexico City. Nonchalantly attired in his open mouthed "dining" mask and wearing a fashionably tailored leisure suit, he appeared relaxed and oblivious to the crowd dancing around him. Of course, appearances can be deceiving.

"Detective," he muttered quietly to his companion, "look over there at those two women seated next to the window."

Officer Carlos Quintana glanced quickly over his shoulder in an experienced, professional manner.

"Yes, El Santo, I see them. Very attractive."

"Now look at that small mirror on the wall opposite us."

Quintana looked at the small, ornate looking-glass which had obviously been hung on the restaurant's wall as decoration. It clearly showed the table where the two women should have been seated. Yet, instead of revealing two well-heeled senoritas dressed up for a night on the town, he found himself looking upon two hideous corpses dressed in rotting garments from another age. Shocked, he turned back to El Santo who favored him with a knowing nod.

"Many of the undead possess powers to cloud the minds of the living through illusion," commented the masked man, "it allows them to move amongst men without being detected. It looks as though Professor Helsing was right."

Quintana nodded in an unsettled matter. Several days before, the shy reclusive academic had warned the police that an unspeakable and unprecedented uprising of the undead was underway. Not wanting to take any chances when it came to matters of the supernatural, the Captain had asked El Santo for his expert assistance on the matter. Normally, Quintana didn't believe in zombies, vampires, and monsters, but it appeared that this time his superior had been correct in his judgment.

"What should we do, Santo?" asked the policeman in alarm.

"Because those vampires are women, they have come in search of female victims." He replied, "You see, detective, the restless dead despise those who remind them of what they were in life. Those two creatures were once beautiful. Now, cursed with un-life, they will try to destroy what beauty they can by killing lovely young women from this club. We must stop them before they strike!"

With incredible agility the short wrestler sprang toward the table where the two vampire women sat, scattering the small crowd of female admirers that had gathered around him. Drawing a flask from his breast pocket, he flung a small amount of liquid at them. Instantly their horrific true nature was revealed to the crowd, who began to scream and run around in a panic. With an inhuman scream of anguish the vampire woman turned into bats, quickly flying out of a nearby window into the night.

"Holy water from the local church," explained El Santo, "Now, quickly, detective! We can follow them back to their lair!"

The policeman and the masked wrestler fought through the frightened mob of pleasure seekers to the door, bursting out of one of the club's side exits into the parking lot. They were almost to El Santo's custom Aston-Martin convertible when two male vampires with enormous pectoral muscles, large fangs, and flowing capes sprung from the bushes nearby to block

artwork by Brad Parnell

Finally, I would like to offer a word of explanation about this issue's YGHC column. As the actual public career of El Santo involved the constant perpetration of a peculiar mythology that consisted of blending wrestling fact (a questionable concept at best) with film fiction in the minds of his millions of fans, I have chosen to do the same. For while Rudy Guzman may never have saved the planet from Martians or rescued a beautiful woman from the clutches of the Daughter of Frankenstein, El Santo did these sorts of things before enjoying his *huevos rancheros* in the morning.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF LUCHA LIBRE

Mysterious hooded wrestlers are nothing new in Western culture. An anonymous masked grappler caused quite a sensation in the Parisian sports tournament of 1873 when he defeated all of his opponents without ever revealing his identity. Various "Masked Marvels" appeared in the first decades of the 20th Century, wrestling in dusty sideshow exhibitions throughout North America. Still, the origins of this phenomenon in Mexico are somewhat obscure. We know that the sport of wrestling first surfaced in Mexico during Maximilian's 1863 French intervention, when visiting European wrestlers drew the well-documented fascination of local audiences. But it wasn't until an infamous soldier, property inspector, and visionary wrestling promoter named Salvador Lutteroth imported the sport into his country with the founding of the EMLL (Empresa Mexicana de Lucha Libre) in 1933 that proper Enmascarados (masked men) began to surface in Mexico

their path. Drawing his service revolver from his jacket, Quintana took careful aim at the two abominations then shot each of them three times in the chest at short range. Incredibly, the vampires seemed unaffected by his deadly fire. With evil smiles, they raised their well-developed arms and advanced on the two men.

"No, detective," cautioned El Santo as he placed a restraining arm across the man's chest, "firearms never seem to work against the undead. Oddly, though, physical violence seems to work just fine. Allow me to thwart their evil through the incredible power of Lucha Libre!"

Without warning, the Man in the Mask of Silver Leapt into the air then slammed into the vampires with a perfectly executed Flying Plancha. He then used a deadly karate chop to stun one of them while grappling the other into an El Christo, a sacred full-nelson hold that renders vampires completely helpless. Unfortunately, the first vampire proved more resilient than the masked man had expected, quickly recovering enough to deliver a dishonorable blow to El Santo's back with all of his unholy strength. Forced to drop the second vampire onto the ground, he spun on the advancing monster and drove his fist into his chest in a perfectly executed Harvester that flipped the vampire over on his back. When the first vampire began to totter to his feet, El Santo grabbed him by the shoulders, threw him into the air, and executed an excruciating spinebuster slam onto the unholy warrior by slamming him back-first into the cement. El Santo drew a pair of sharpened wooden stakes from inside of his jacket's lapels while the two nosferatu rolled helplessly on the ground in unspeakable pain. With a stake clutched in either hand, he flung himself onto his foes, driving the sacred birch wood through their hearts. An alarming sound like air rushing into an enclosed space filled the night as their remains quickly self-immolated in unholy blue flame, leaving only smoking piles of ash behind.

El Santo stood up before carefully adjusting his leisure suit, taking special care to straighten out his sleeves.

"That was amazing, El Santo!" exclaimed Detective Quintana.

"Yes, but it appears that the vampiric women have escaped us." He replied calmly, "Still, they headed in the direction of the large abandoned stone castle on the edge of the city… so they shouldn't be too hard to find. Detective, gather your men together and meet me at that castle. Get the ancient sword of Aztec warriors from the museum. Bring several cans of gasoline, a high-powered rifle, and ten Bibles with you. We will put an end to this evil once and for all!"

With that, El Santo leapt over the side of his sports car into the driver's seat and was gone in a cloud of dust and a flash of expensive chrome.

There are certain men in history that, through a combination of their own natural abilities, above average willpower, general good character, and perhaps a little luck, achieve enough renown to be thought of as "legendary" amongst their kind. Then there are those men, such as Babe Ruth or Steven King, who are so incredibly successful in their undertakings that they actually become synonymous with their chosen occupation (baseball and horror fiction, respectively). Finally, there exist a select few who attain such levels of notoriety that they become not only legendary or synonymous with their calling but actually transcend mortality itself to become symbols of their nation and culture. In Mexico, until recent history, there existed such a man. His name was Rudolfo Guzman Huerta, yet few people knew him by that name. The world knew him as *El Santo* (The Saint), the most beloved *Lucha Libre* (or Free Fighting) wrestler in Mexican history as well as a hero of the common man in Mexico City. For while the traditions and history of pro-wrestling in Mexico are rich, deep, and widely respected with literally thousands of masked men thrilling crowds throughout that nation over the last 75 years, El Santo alone transcended the sport entirely to become a movie star, comic book hero, and national cultural symbol. During his multi-decade career, which began in 1935 and lasted for more than 40 years, El Santo created a mystique inside and outside the ring that elevated him in the eyes of his millions of fans to the level of a demigod during his life and a saint after his death. His athletic abilities and honorable character were so popular with poor Mexicans that he influenced not only future *Luchadores* (masked wrestlers), but also his nation as a whole. He may have worn silver but, for his sport, his fans, and his nation, he ushered in what has become a golden age of masked wrestling.

El Santo
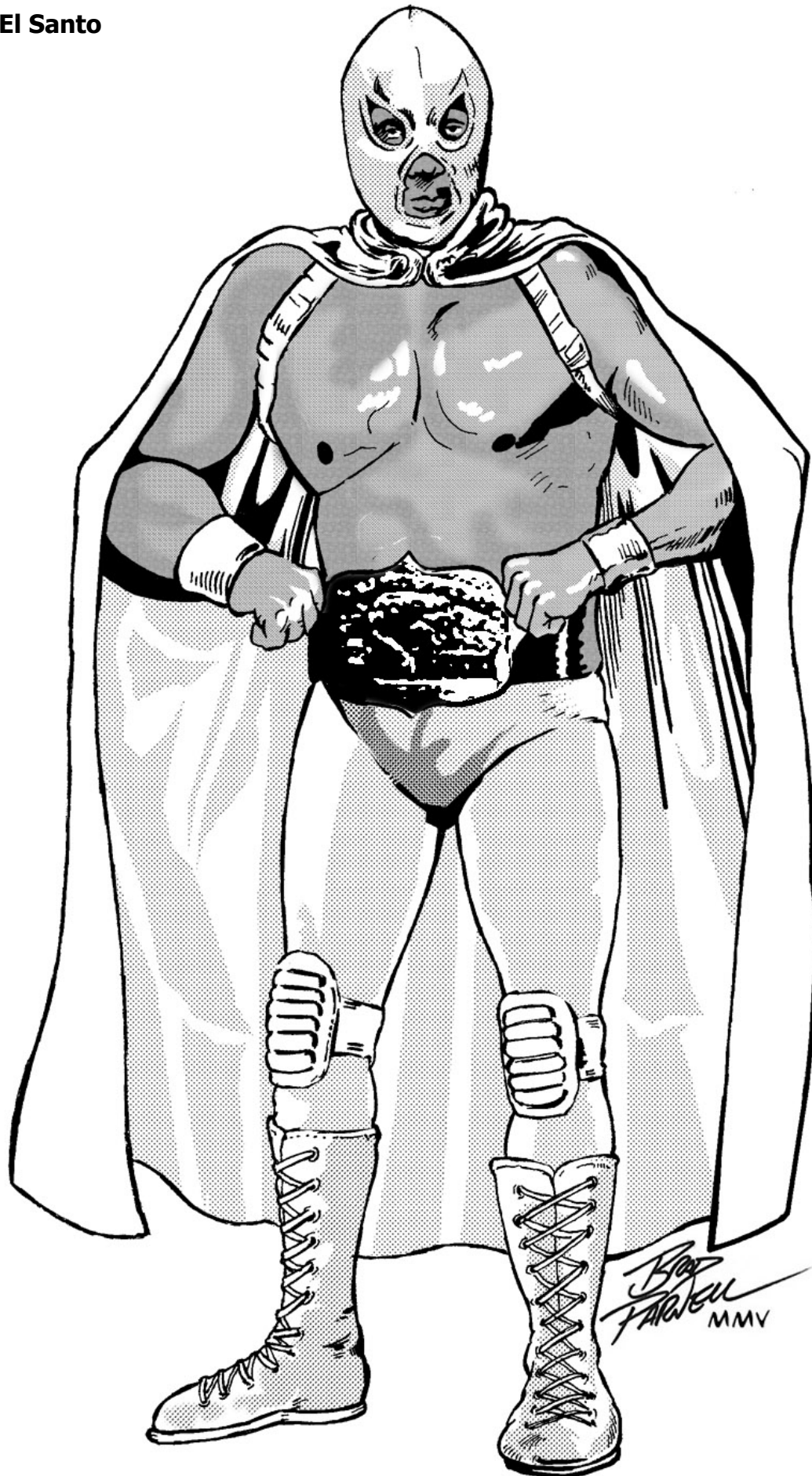
City at the league's Modelo Arena.

Interestingly, the first masked Lucha Libre fighter wasn't Mexican at all. In 1934, Lutteroth introduced a new wrestler named *El Enmascarado* (The Masked Man) who wore a simple black leather mask. El Enmascarado was actually a Texas wrestler named Cyclone MacKay who had decided to create a new persona for his south-of-the-border career. He proved so popular that Lutteroth quickly incorporated more masked wrestlers into Lucha Libre, creating a variety of heroic and villainous characters that the audience could easily identify. Yet the exact appeal of the mask to the original Lucha Libre audience has never really been pinpointed. Perhaps latent memories of exciting Meso-American religious masks lurked shallowly beneath the cultural surface. Or perhaps it was the international popularity of comic strip characters like The Phantom and The Shadow. Whatever the reason, shortly after Salvador Lutteroth introduced masked wrestling he discovered his first legitimate superstar,

the masked icon *El Santo* (The Saint), who is generally considered to be the greatest Mexican wrestler of all-time.

Regardless of its origins, Mexican wrestling fans enthusiastically embraced the mask and never looked back. In this manner, Lucha Libre quickly differentiated itself from wrestling in the United States, where villains almost exclusively covered their faces. In America, masks were considered little more than props to be sacrificed in some dramatic unveiling gimmick. Mexicans, however, loved for their heroes as well as villains to wear hoods. The appeal was a populist rather than an elitist one. For them the mask wasn't about the mystery of a hidden identity, the concealment of some nefarious secret, or the titillation of getting a look at who was 'hiding' under the hood. In Lucha Libre, the mask was all about creative expression, individuality, and anonymity. The neutral identities of big stars gave them an odd "everyman" appeal; you never knew who could be under there. After all, any farmhand or railroad worker could

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El Santo

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
23	STR	13	14-	600 kg; 4½d6 HTH [2]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
20	CON	20	13-	
20	BODY	20	13-	
14	INT	4	12-	PER Roll: 12-
17	EGO	14	12-	ECV: 6
19	PRE	9	13-	PRE Attack: 3½d6
14	COM	2	12-	
12	PD	7		Total: 20 PD (8 rPD)
9	ED	5		Total: 14 ED (5 rED)
5	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
11	REC	4		
40	END	0		
55	STUN	13		

Total Characteristic Cost: 165

Movement: Running: 7"/14"
Leaping: 4½"/9"
Swimming: 4"/8"

Cost	Powers	END
4	*Radio Watch:* Radio Perception/ Transmission (Radio Group); OAF (-1), Restrainable (-½), Gestures (-¼)	
20	*Tough Guy:* Armor (8 PD/5 ED)	
20	*Tough Guy:* Physical Damage Reduction, 50%	

Perks
12	Contact: The Police (Access to Major Institutions, Very Useful Skills or Resources, Limited by Identity, Good Relationship, Organization Contact) 8-	
1	Member of EMLL Wrestling Association	
10	Money: Wealthy	
9	Reputation: Crime Fighting Masked Wrestler (Large Group) 14-, +3/+3d6	
12	Vehicle: Aston-Martin Convertible	

Skills
5	+1 with Hand-to-Hand Combat
12	+4 with Wrestling Moves
3	AK: Mexico City 12-
3	Acrobatics 13-
3	Acting 13-
3	Breakfall 13-
1	Electronics 8-
3	KS: Anatomy 12-
3	KS: Lucha Libre Rules and History 12-
3	KS: The Occult 12-
2	Language: Ancient Language! (Literacy Only)
1	Mechanics 8-
3	Oratory 13-
3	Seduction 13-
3	Shadowing 12-
3	Streetwise 13-
2	WF: Small Arms

Martial Arts: Submission Holds

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Damage
4	El Christo[1]	+1	-1	Grab 2 Arms; 58 STR Hold
3	El Candado[2]	+2	+0	Grab Head; 58 STR Hold
3	La de a Caballo[3]	+1	-2	Opponent Must be on Ground; 2 Arms Pinned; 58 STR Hold
4	Hangman's Tree	-2	+0	Grab 1 Limb; 4½d6 NND
3	Face Driver	+2	-1	Grab Head; Both Fall; 58 STR Hold
3	Escorpion[4]	+1	-1	Grab 2 Legs; 53 STR Hold; Opponent Must be on Ground
3	Basic Squeeze	+0	-1	13½d6 Squeeze, Opponent Must be Grabbed
3	Super Squeeze	+0	-1	4½d6 NND(7) Squeeze; Opponent Must be Grabbed
5	Deadly Squeeze	+0	-2	HKA 2d6+1
5	The Harvester	+2	+0	12½d6 Strike; Target Falls; Opponent Must be Running
3	D.O.A.	+2	+0	10½d6 Strike; Both Fall
3	Takedown!	+1	+1	9½d6 Strike; Target Falls
5	Flying Plancha	+1	+0	9½d6 +v/5; FMove
3	Off the Rope Drop Kick Suicida	+0	-1	9 ½d6 +v/5; Both Fall; FMove
5	El Santo Backbreaker Slam!	-2	-1	Grab; Opponent Falls; 11½d6 Strike
4	Karate Chop!	-2	+0	HKA 2d6+1
4	Breakout!	+0	+0	63 STR Escape
3	El Campana[5]	+1	+0	11½d6 Strike; 63 STR Escape; Attacker Must be Grabbed
5	Flying Dodge	—	+4	Dodge, Abort; FMove
20	+5 Damage Classes (already added in)			

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[1] The Christ
[2] The Padlock
[3] Camel Clutch
[4] Scorpion Deathlock
[5] The Bell

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 235

Total Cost: 400

200+ Disadvantages

15 Distinctive Features: Masked Wrestler (Not Concealable [El Santo cannot take the mask off])

15 Hunted: Heels of the EMLL 11- (Mo Pow, Limited Area, Public ID, Mildly)

15 Psychological Limitation: Technico's Code of Honor: Never Break Your Word; Never Allow Yourself to be Unmasked; Always Protect the Weak; Never Use Questionable Tactics Unless Your Opponent Does First (Common, Strong)

15 Psychological Limitation: Lady's Man with a Love of Luxury (Common, Strong)

10 Rivalry: with all Heels in the EMLL, Professional, Mo Pow, Seek to Outdo, Rival Aware

15 Social Limitation: Lucha Libre Identity (Very Frequently, Minor)

15 Weirdness Magnet: Unluck: 3d6

Total Disadvantage Points: 400

attain a glorious hooded persona with hard work and dedication.

Mexico's first group of Enmascarados wore primary colored masks of very simple design. El Santo, for example, wore a nearly featureless silver mask whose only distinguishing mark were teardrop shaped eyes. They didn't have much choice, really. In the days before television, live crowds had to be able to easily recognize the men in the ring, especially from the cheap seats in back. Thus, it was sinister black for *El Murcielago* (The Bat), pure white for evil mad doctor *El Medico Asesino* (The Killer Doctor), green for the ghostly *El Espectro* (The Specter), and of course blue for *El Demonio Azul* (The Blue Demon). These early pioneers also began to develop the unique athletic style that would become synonymous with wrestling in Mexico, a combination of circus acrobatics, crowd-pleasing carnival theatrics, and high-risk highflying maneuvers. The good guys, or *Los Technicos*, made skillful gymnastic maneuvers, complicated holds, and a chivalrous code of honor; the bad

guys, or *Los Rudos,* employed greater strength, crowd provoking antics, and ruthlessness. Additionally, while the Technicos typically embodied the ideals which poor Mexicans aspired to, such as honor, skill, and bravery, the Rudos characteristically represented the various ills which afflicted them in their everyday lives: bullies, devils, incompetent quack doctors, tax collectors, and Texas Rangers, to name but a few.

By the 1960s, the availability of better materials allowed Enmascarados to experiment with the design and coloration of their masks just as color television and glossy magazines became widely available in Mexico. One of Lucha Libre's foremost idea men, promoter Vincente Perez, made the most of these new mediums by creating dozens of new characters including the now legendary *Mil Mascaras* (The Man of 1,000 Masks) and the galactic hero *El Gigante Tinieblas* (The Space Giant). The decade also saw the masked wrestler leap into the public consciousness through an explosion of multimedia products. Million-selling comic books,

El Santo

Background/History: The man who was to be known as El Santo was born Rodolfo Guzman Huerta in the Mexican state of Hidalgo (now considered to be the holy land of Lucha Libre) on September 28th, 1917. The fifth of seven children, young Rodolfo excelled at several sports including baseball and football. At this time, many sporting and social events in Hidalgo took place in casinos, and he would frequent them from time to time with his family. It was in these gambling houses that the Huerta children first set their eyes on a wrestling ring. They were all immediately hooked on masked wrestlers with their mysterious dramatic personalities and impressive athletic skills. Rodolfo was actually the fourth member of his family to wrestle professionally: his brothers Miguel "Black" Guzman, Jimmy Guzman, and Pantera Negra all laced up their masks before he entered the ring.

In 1934 at age 17 Rodolfo, who had come to the conclusion that he wasn't going to make it as a professional baseball or football player, began to train seriously for a wrestling career under the guidance of his older brother Miguel. He also began to practice both jujitsu and Greco-Roman wrestling to give himself an edge. Later that year he made his debut in the ring alongside his brother as "Rudy Guzman," and they were quickly signed by the prestigious EMLL (Empresa Mexicana de Lucha Libre) wrestling league. From there, Miguel "Black" Guzman's career took off. He won a long series of matches, awards, and accolades that included becoming the 1939 EMLL "rookie of the year." Unfortunately, Rudy seemed stuck in his brother's shadow, shackled with a role as his older brother's sidekick. So he dissolved their tag-team partnership and struck out on his own, trying out a variety of masked personas including *El Hombre Rojo* (the Red Man) and *El Murcielago Enmascarado* (the Masked Bat) II. He even left the well-established EMLL to join a new league that had been formed by renegade wrestling talent scout Jesus Lomeli. Together the two of them brain-stormed various ironic masked personas in which an image of good could be worn by an evil ruffian.

El Santo was born as a *rudo* (or villain) on July 26th, 1942 when Rudy entered the ring dressed in an inexpensive silver mask and costume he had purchased with his remaining meager wages from the EMLL. The match was an eight-man elimination battle royal with the two finalists wrestling under a 2/3 falls stipulation. The last two men standing were El Santo and *Ciclon Veloz* (Fast Cyclone). The first two falls were unremarkable, but in the third fall El Santo displayed such unrelenting *rudeza* (or villainy) that he became an immediate hit with

the fans. He poked his opponent in the eyes, brawled without restraint, and attacked the referee (Jesus Lomeli himself) when he got in the way. El Santo lost the match by disqualification but the fans were hooked. A rudo's rudo, Rudy exhibited his plentiful and devious talent in dozens of subsequent matches against all takers, going so far as to land eight straight low blows against an opponent in a single match.

Villain or not, El Santo's masked visage was turning up in the sports sections of all the newspapers and magazines in Mexico City. He defeated Ciclon Veloz to win the Mexican National Welterweight in 1943 and, ironically, the original El Murcielago Enmascarado for the National Middleweight title becoming Lucha Libre's first double champion. He inaugurated the completion of the Arena Coliseo by wrestling Tarzan Lopez in a main even mask versus hair match. In 1944, after recovering from a near-fatal automobile accident involving one of his beloved convertible sports cars, El Santo teamed up with Gory Guerrero to form *La Pareja Atomica* (the Atomic Pair) to form one of the most influential teams in wrestling history. It was during this period in his career that El Santo experienced a radical change of heart, one that was to win him not only a world title but the hearts of fans throughout Mexico as well. The EMLL held a tournament to determine who would hold the recently vacated NWA Welterweight title. The final match boiled down to a contest between El Santo and The Bulgarian Pete Pancoff. Santo had just made his opponent submit to a Boston Crab when something odd happened. For the first time, the crowed was cheering *for* him rather than booing *against* him. In defeating a foreign threat to his native land, El Santo has ceased to be a rudo and become a *technico* (or good guy).

Over the next several years, a series of talented new *enmascarados* (or masked men) began to enter the leagues, posing a serious threat to El Santo and Gory Guerrero's titles. One of Lucha Libre's most legendary feuds was born in a match between La Pareja Atomica and the tag team of Blue Demon and Black Shadow. When the veteran luchadores triumphed, Black Shadow swore dire revenge, setting off an epic rivalry that culminated with El Santo taking his mask in 1952. To avenge his friend, Blue Demon took Santo's NWA welterweight title the following year. This victory elevated Blue Demon's status amongst wrestling fans at exactly the same time that Lucha Libre began to get major television coverage in Mexico. Almost overnight El Santo became a recognized symbol of rising Mexican national pride and ideals, with Blue Demon as his trusted companion (sidekick would be pushing it). They both became the

main characters in several popular comic books (as well as a series of pulp fiction thriller stories) fighting monsters, demons, alien invaders, and mobsters in addition to evil wrestlers.

The financial success of El Santo's comic books spawned a series of films beginning with *Cererbro Del Mal* (Brain of Evil, 1958) that were even more profitable and, correspondingly, led to other enmascarados starring in their own films – 96 to date, as they are still being sporadically made. In these films, brave masked wrestlers fought not only rudos in the rings but mobsters, monsters, and mad scientists in the streets, suburbs, jungles, and deserts of Mexico. Although filmed on incredibly limited budgets, they are fun (if cheesy) films that are heavily influenced by low-rent American and British horror. El Santo starred in 52 of them during his 40-year wrestling career, making him one of the most prolific and popular film stars in Latin American history. The best of these films (such as *Misterio En Las Bermudas*) feature a teaming up of the ever-confident El Santo, the suave Mil Mascaras, and the grouchy Blue Demon into a friendly "Rat Pack" of wrestling that have a very similar feel to a Frank Sinatra's "buddy" movies such as the original *Ocean's Eleven*.

By the 1970s, old age was beginning to wear on El Santo. He was still as skilled and popular as ever, but he began to relegate himself to six-man tag matches, forming a popular trio with his friends *Mil Mascaras* (Man of 1,000 Masks) and *El Solitario* (Solitaire). In 1980, he fell unconscious in the middle of a match and was diagnosed with a heart problem. As a result, his wrestling license was revoked until he had a secret operation to fix the problem. But Rudy could see the writing on the wall. In 1982, he retired after a successful three-match tour, fighting with fellow Technicos and old friends Gory Guerrero, Hurricane Ramirez, and El Solitario against the villainous team up of The Sign, The Black Navarrese, The Texan, and Mad Dog Aguayo in his final match anywhere. He then handed his mask over to his son *Hijo del Santo* (Son of Santo) to carry on the family Technico tradition (there is now a Nieto (grandson) del Santo as well).

Two years later on February 5th, 1984, Rudolfo was rushed to the Mosel Hospital with chest pains. He died later the same day. As a statement about his life, legacy, and beliefs, El Santo was buried with his mask on. More than 10,000 people, wrestlers and fans alike, attended his funeral to say a final goodbye to their hero. In his memory the CMLL (the modern descendent of the venerable EMLL) holds an annual tournament for young wrestlers called *La Leyenda de Plata* (the Silver Legend) in which the winner receives a special plaque adorned with El Santo's image. It is currently the highest honor that can be achieved by an aspiring enmascarado.

Personality/Motivation: Although we can only hypothesize about Rudy Huerta's motivations, his famous alter ego has a well-established personality. In Mexican culture, El Santo holds about the same position as Superman holds in American culture, except better because you can throw James Bond and the Lone Ranger into the mix for good measure. Better, because an American comic fan will never see Superman fighting Bizarro in public on a Saturday night for his personal entertainment or catch him dining out with Lois Lane *and* Lana Lang at the same time, while El Santo does all these things and more. He likes to drive expensive sports cars (he has an Aston-Martin as well as a Bentley), lives in a fantastic mansion with a secret headquarters below it, and goes to nightclubs wearing stylish clothing and a mask. Beautiful women swoon over him everywhere he goes. He fights the three evil Ms of Mexican horror cinema (Monsters, Mobsters, and Mad Scientists) because (duh!) that's what a hero does. Although El Santo is honorable, brave, and straightforward, he's also streetwise with a good grasp of "how things are" when it comes to dealing with corrupt police or the greedy, petty nature of his fellow man. He follows a wrestler's code of honor: he never breaks his word, never allows himself to be unmasked, always protects the weak (especially women and children), and never uses questionable tactics unless his opponent does first. Of course, when fighting the undead, monsters, or space aliens, all bets are off as only humans can have honor. So riddling unnatural foes with bullets, pouring gasoline on them then lighting them on fire, hacking at them with swords, and blowing them up with a half ton of explosives is just fine.

Whenever a famous Mexican archeologist needs to investigate an Aztec ruin, he calls El Santo to come along as protection against attacking mummies. Whenever a south-of-the-border scientist conducts a dangerous experiment, he asks El Santo to attend just in case zombies are the unintended result of his endeavors. When a crime gets too strange for the Mexico City police to solve then, well… you get the picture. El Santo is a very popular guy. That said, he never lets his incredible fame, overwhelming machismo, unbeatable martial prowess, and irresistibleness to the fairer sex go to his head. That's just the way in which the universe El Santo lives in functions.

Quote: "Zombies are generally weak opponents as their bodies have been corrupted not only by death, but by evil as well."

plastic action figures, and action novels flooded stores throughout Mexico. El Santo, Blue Demon, Mil Mascaras, and their friends began fighting mobsters, monsters, and mad scientists in a dizzying array of big screen productions, in the process creating an entire film new genre.

The multi-faceted celebrity of Lucha Libre wrestlers had become all encompassing for many fans. If you were an El Santo fan you could see your hero in the ring at the Arena Mexico on a Friday night, go to the theater to see him fight vampires the next morning, and then round out your day watching him battle sea creatures in his comics. Then, if you were really lucky, you might get to see your hooded idol on the street in his mask, wearing a suit! In the 1970s and '80s, several Enmascarados actually managed to stop a couple of bank robberies in Mexico City, while others helped distribute food, clothing, and medical aid after an earthquake. This further complicated matters in the minds of Lucha Libre fans, where the line between wrestler, movie star, and superhero became very blurry indeed.

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In the modern era, Lucha Libre has enjoyed a period of innovation, international exposure, and counterculture chic unprecedented in its history. From FOX channel's live action show *Los Luchadores* to Cartoon Network's *Mucha Lucha* to the heavy metal band White Zombie's music videos, the cultural influence of masked Mexican wrestling has accompanied America's newest wave of immigrants northward into the economic promised land. Tribute hybrid wrestling league-burlesque shows like Los Angeles' *Lucha Va Voom* and San Francisco's *Incredibly Strange Wrestling* help popularize Lucha Libre in their own uniquely Californian way, while the Japanese have incorporated aspects of Lucha Libre into their own professional wrestling to create a style called *Puroresu*. Japanese comic books and cartoons have, in return, influenced Lucha Libre masks, many of which have now evolved wings, horns, peaked hair, teeth, and fins. The Internet veritably buzzes with English and Spanish language Lucha Libre websites, discussion boards, and international tape trading fan sites. There is even a rumor

Powers/Tactics: El Santo is a master of Lucha Libre, a form of wrestling known best for its high-flying bodyslams, off-the-rope kicks, elaborate submission holds, complex takedowns, and wild theatrics. Although flamboyant, this martial art can also be extremely effective when used outside of the ring. El Santo's submission holds, many of which give him an equivalent STR of 50 or 60, in particular pose a problem for any potential combatant. When El Santo has an opponent firmly in his manly grip, he can apply any one of three types of pressure squeezes: standard 13½d6 STUN, 4½d6 NND, or 2d6+1 HKA damage respectively. Damage from pressure squeezes is always automatic with no "to hit" roll needed so long as the victim is already held. Additionally, the Breakfall skill doesn't apply to Lucha Libre submission holds and takedowns that send an opponent straight into the ground (although they will for ones that throw him some distance). Lucha Libre strikes and takedowns are made even more effective by the fact martial arts rules for knockback doesn't apply; use two rather than three dice when calculating knockback from one of El Santo's attacks. El Santo's standard moves are as follows:

- *El Campana* (The Bell): A double-handed blow to the head commonly used to break a bear hug. The attacker claps his hands or forearms around his victim's head, stunning him and disrupting his equilibrium. Also known as the Bell Clap or Ear Ringer

- *El Cristo* (The Christ): A full nelson hold in which the attacker grabs his standing opponent from behind by placing both of his arms under his victim's arms then locks them behind the victim's neck. With his victim's arms outstretched, the attacker then provides pressure by pushing down on the victim's neck.

- *El Candado* (The Padlock): A headlock performed from behind in which one arm is wrapped around the neck while the other is placed atop the head. The attacker than squeezes his victim's throat while bending his head down, choking his opponent while wrenching his neck.

- *D.O.A.:* The attacker stands face-to-face with his victim. He then grabs the front of his victim with one arm and hooks his leg with one of his own, tripping him. The attacker falls backward, driving his victim's face and chest into the mat.

- *Escorpion* (Scorpion Deathlock): A leglock performed when the opponent is face down on the ground with his head facing away from his attacker's front. The Attacker grabs

both of his opponent's legs then wraps them around one of his legs to form an "X" shape with his feet held in front of the attacker's chest. Pressure is then applied to the X with both arms.

- *Face Driver:* The attacker places his victim's head in a standing head scissors. The attacker drops down to his knees and drives the victim face-first to the mat.

- *Flying Plancha:* The attacker grabs the ropes with one arm while moving, lifts himself into the air, and then smashes his entire body into his opponent at an angle so as to knock him to the ground.

- *Hangman's Tree:* The attacker grabs his victim by the neck then lifts him off the ground while choking him.

- *Harvester:* As the victim is running forward, the attacker drives his fist into his upper chest, flipping the victim over onto his back.

- *La de a Caballo* (Camel Clutch): With his opponent already on the ground, the attacker sits on his opponent's back and grabs his face while trapping his arms between the attacker's knees and elbows. The attacker then leans back, applying pressure simultaneously to the neck and spine.

- *Off the Rope Drop Kick Suicida:* The attacker jumps in the air and kicks the victim with both feet. The attack can be focused on the victim's head, chest, stomach, back, or legs.

- *El Santo Spinebuster Slam:* The attacker lifts his opponent over his head then slams him back-first onto the mat.

With his array of technical wrestling moves and his innate physical toughness (50% Physical Damage Reduction and some Armor), El Santo can hold his own against any normal "superhero" built on a similar number of points. Yet the Man in the Silver Mask has a wide variety of other abilities. His Lucha Libre skills include a superb grasp of acrobatics, acting, oratory, and anatomy. His years in the square circle have also made him one of the most wealthy and famous men in Mexico. A decade of fighting mobsters in the mean streets of Mexico City has equipped him with Streetwise, Shadowing, AK: Mexico City, WF: Small Arms, and a friendly relationship with the police. Lastly, his frequent encounters with the supernatural have gifted him with KS: The Occult as well as the unique ability to read whatever ancient language he needs to read at the moment he needs to read it.

If you wish to make El Santo less powerful for your campaign, take away his Physical Damage Reduction and Damage Classes. If you wish to increase his powers, try adding one of the two following gadget multipowers:

Cost	Powers	END
14	*Ancient Aztec Wrestling Mask:* Multipower, 25-point Reserve; all slots OIF (-½), Only Works against the Supernatural (-¼)	–
1u	1) HA +5d6 (9½d6 with STR); HA Lim (-½), OIF (-½, Only Works against the Supernatural (-¼)	2
1u	2) Detect the Supernatural 12- (Unusual Group), Range, Targeting, Tracking; OIF (-½), Only Works against the Supernatural (-¼)	0
1u	3) HKA 1½d6 (3d6+1 with STR); OIF (-½), Only Works against the Supernatural (-¼)	2
12	*Cape:* Multipower, 25-point Reserve; all slots OIF (-½), Activation Roll 14- (-½)	–
1u	1) Armor (10 PD/6 ED); OIF (-½), Activation Roll 14- (-½)	0
1u	2) Gliding 20", 4x Noncombat; OIF (-½), Activation Roll 14- (-½)	0
1u	3) Missile Deflection (Any Ranged Attack); OIF (-½), Activation Roll 14- (-½)	0

Campaign Use: El Santo has potentially unlimited uses for a creative GM. He can be used to inject a bit of levity into an otherwise serious *Champions*, *Dark Champions*, or *Horror Hero* campaign in which the characters are pitted a horrific supernatural menace of some sort. After an initial defeat, El Santo arrives to show the PCs "how it's done" south-of-the-border old school style, easily dispatching the very same monsters which gave the PCs such a solid thumping the day before. Certainly it will make players' heads spin if they show up to combat an invading alien menace only to find an enormous masked Mexican already pummeling little green men into submission when they arrive on the scene. A time traveling El Santo wouldn't seem terribly out of place in the Old West, especially if there are outbreaks of supernatural menaces out on the prairie somewhere. In a game with a focus on espionage and secret agents, the GM could drive his players out of their tiny minds by introducing El Santo as a wildly out of place and obvious secret agent that, perversely, the NPCs simply accept as part of the scenery without question. Or perhaps in the distant world of Galactic Champions El Santo is found frozen in a block of ice in Antarctica and, when released, forms a crimefighting partnership with the retro Golden Age hero Bulletproof.

A campaign where the PCs are all masked wrestlers fighting the three Ms of Lucha Libre cinema (Monsters, Mobsters, and Mad Scientists) could be extremely entertaining, possibly to the point of suicidal madness (sorry; wrestling film speak)!

At DunDraCon this year, I ran an eight-hour Lucha Libre film tribute game entitled *Los Enmascarados Del Misterio Contra Dracula y El Hombre Lobo y Las Diabolicas* (The Masked Men of Mystery vs. Dracula and the Wolfman and the Diabolical Women) in which six Technicos first fought six Rudos in the ring, then fought an all-female demon biker gang, then had to confront a half dozen or so movie monsters at the climax. It was fun for the players, entertaining for me, and fairly easy to create. I used Hero Designer v2.0 to create a dozen 250-350 point wrestlers, pulled six 250-400 point villains out of *Monsters, Minions, and Marauders* to create Las Diabolicas, and got the movie monsters from the pages *HERO System Bestiary*. To add some flavor I gave each player a 25-35 point "Santo Card" which they could use at any time to add more powers, skills, or characteristics to their enmascarados.

Appearance: With his trademark well-developed hairless chest and silver mask, El Santo stands out in any crowd, even if the crowd scrupulously pretends that he doesn't! Although not very tall, The Silver Masked One has a larger than life presence that seems to dominate his surroundings. Much like his American counterpart Frank Sinatra, men want to be him and women want to be with him (even if they stand a few inches taller than he does). Seemingly immune to age, he remained an active and popular wrestler well into his sixties with no noticeable change to his appearance. El Santo is never seen in public without a distinctive silver mask with teardrop-shaped eyes that covers his entire head. He also owns a special version of his mask with an open chin that he wears when he is drinking or dining. In the ring, he wears sliver wrestlers' leggings and boots but leaves his massive chest bare. He also occasionally wears a flashy silver cape studded with sequins. El Santo generally dresses in his wrestling gear when fighting crime or the undead but, just as often, he dresses in hand tailored suits, fashionable leisure wear, or safari outfits.

that Disney has a high budget Luchadores film in development.

SANTO FILM SAMPLES

El Santo in the Wax Museum (1964): El Santo is up against mad Doctor Carroll, a concentration camp survivor who hates all things that are beautiful. The nefarious physician kidnaps a female reporter then has one of Santo's friends stabbed and tossed into boiling wax. He also commands an army of monstrous wax statues created from living human beings. Carroll plans to turn the attractive reporter into a panther/human hybrid then, ultimately, all of the inhabitants of Mexico City into monsters. Santo arrives just in time to foil him and wrestle a Frankenstein monster before throwing it into an electrical array. Unable to defeat El Santo, the wax monsters turn on their creator. After the creatures kill Carroll, El Santo topples a vat of molten wax over them, ending their evil forever. Then he drives off in his sports car.

El Santo in the Treasure of Dracula (1968): El Santo is not only Mexico's greatest wrestler but its greatest scientist as well! After inventing

a device that can transport people back in time to relive their past lives, El Santo's friend Dr. Supulveda gathers a small group of incredulous scientists to help verify his claim. The Silver Masked One needs a volunteer to save his scientific reputation by using the device. Supulveda's daughter Luisa volunteers. She enters El Santo's time tunnel device wearing a silver suit. Transported into the late 19th Century she has become the child of a Professor Soler, who is worried about his daughter's declining health. He calls on his old friend Professor Van Roth for advice. Van Roth immediately sizes up the situation and suspects Soler's neighbor the mysterious Count Alucard (secretly Dracula). Back in the present, El Santo, Dr. Supulveda, and their cowardly friend Perico witnesses these events unfolding on black and white closed circuit television. After Luisa is bitten by Dracula, El Santo saves her from becoming one of the living dead by returning her to the present. El Santo then decides to try and locate Dracula's lost treasure, but things are complicated by another mysterious masked wrestler who seems intent on the same goal.

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1961 *Santo Contra El Rey Del Crimen (Santo vs. the King of Crime)*
1961 *Santo En El Hotel De La Muerte (Santo in the Hotel of Death)*
1961 *Santo Contra El Cerebro Diabolico (Santo vs. the Diabolical Brain)*
1962 *Santo Contra Las Mujeres Vempiro (Santo vs. the Vampire Women)*
1963 *Santo En El Museo De Cera (Santo in the Wax Museum)*
1963 *Santo Contra El Estrangulador (Santo vs. the Strangler)*
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1969 *El Mundo De Los Muertos (The World of the Dead)*
1969 *Santo Contra Los Cazadores De Cabezas (Santo vs. the Head Hunters)*
1969 *Santo Frente A La Muerte (Santo Faces Death)*
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1979 *Santo En La Frontera Del Terror (Santo on the Border of Terror)*
1981 *Santo Contra El Asesino De La T.V. (Santo vs. the Television Killer)*
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        has now become Santo*

Santo and Blue Demon vs. Dracula and the Wolf Man (1972): El Santo is summoned by Professor Cristaldi, a direct descendent of the man who killed both Count Dracula and the Wolf Man. After a death threat against his entire family, Cristaldi asks El Santo to help protect his cute granddaughter, her highly attractive mother, a good looking maid, and his insanely beautiful niece.

El Santo calls on his friend the Blue Demon for help. Meanwhile, an evil bearded hunchback kidnaps the Professor and cuts his throat, draining his blood over the remains of Dracula and the Wolf Man. Back among the living, the monsters create more vampires and werewolves out of kidnapped citizens. The Wolf Man then assumes his handsome mortal form to seduce Cristaldi's daughter. Eventually El Santo, Blue Demon, and the niece figure out that Dracula is hiding out directly next door. They confront him, the Wolf Man, and an army of werewolves below an abandoned mansion, where the twin supernatural menaces are defeated when they're tossed into a pit of sharpened wooden stakes by our heroes.

Leftover Hero by Steven S. Long

SUPER-SOLDIER VERSUS SUPERHUMAN-SOLDIER

If you look at the various *Champions* products Hero Games has published for the 5th Edition rules, you'll note that none of them uses the term "super-soldier" when referring to attempts to imbue soldiers with paranormal powers. The various projects discussed on, for example, pages 40-43 of *Champions Universe,* which resulted in the creations of characters like Victory and the Janissary, are called *superhuman soldier* projects.

A *super-soldier* project (also known more euphemistically as a "human

Super-Soldier Projects of the World of *Hudson City*

Almost since the time the first soldiers were fielded to fight their foes with spear and sword, rulers and governments have sought ways to improve their performance and capability for enduring the rigors of warfare. In the 20th, and now the 21st, Century, the quest for the perfect soldier reached new heights with the creation by various governments (primarily the United States, the Soviet Union, and a few others) of *super-soldiers* – fighting men enhanced through chemistry, psychology, biology, or some combination of the above to approach, meet, or sometimes even exceed human norms. Similarly, some intelligence agencies have attempted to create "super-spies" through various "human enhancement" programs. This article discusses the major super-soldier projects of the *Dark Champions* setting.

Caveat: this article is written from the GM's point of view, giving full information about the various projects and programs described. GMs who don't want their players to know all of this data should not allow players to read it.

Human Enhancement Projects of the United States

The United States government, primarily the Army and Central Intelligence Agency, has been more active in the attempt to create enhanced soldiers and agents than any other nation in the world. However, its success has been limited.

PROJECT: SODBUSTER

The very first super-soldier program ever begun, Sodbuster started in World War II. It was an attempt to create better soldiers via what would today be called a "health food" diet and training in jujutsu and karate (provided by former Japanese internees). The project was moderately successful; however, virtually all project trainees were killed in combat in the Pacific.

THE EVERGREEN PROJECT

During the Korean War, Major Douglas Nordstrom, one of the few surviving veterans of Sodbuster, initiated this program to assist war efforts. The main thrust of this project was not to create better fighters *per se,* but rather to improve the survivability of soldiers. The goal was to increase resistance to the elements (especially cold), to diseases, and to injury (via autonomic reactions to reduce bleeding and otherwise minimize the impact of trauma).

Evergreen made extensive use of data gleaned from Nazi and Imperial Japanese experiments upon prisoners of war. As with Sodbuster, the project enjoyed some moderate successes, but most trainees were killed in combat.

PROJECT: EPSILON

In the early 1960s, with the Cold War about to heat up in Vietnam, the US Army stepped up its efforts to create super-soldiers. Epsilon made use of advances in psychology (*i.e.* brainwashing) and chemistry (*i.e.* drugs such as LSD) to create soldiers who were highly resistant to pain, able to go without sleep for extended periods, and possessed reaction times far faster than human normal. Epsilon lasted through the late 1960s.

In general, Project: Epsilon was a failure. Most participants became insane or could not withstand the physical aspects of the program. Among the few successes were Jason Coretti, better known as the Hudson City vigilante Jason Scorpion; Sgt. Howie Burke, credited with eliminating two units of VC soldiers singlehandedly while armed only with a knife; and the 1970s New York black crimelord, Mr. Pharaoh. But despite the program's overall failure, it succeeded in that it garnered valuable data for future experiments.

PROJECT: CHRYSALIS

Making use of the knowledge gained in Project: Epsilon, and bringing its own, greater, technological expertise into play, the CIA initiated Project: Chrysalis to create a "super spy." Spearheaded by former Marine Sergeant Lucius Grey, Chrysalis enjoyed somewhat greater success than Epsilon (though none of the names of any of its "alumni" have ever become known), but its successes were still minimal compared with Agency goals and hopes for the program. The Director discontinued Chrysalis in the mid-1970s.

PROJECT: DURABLE

Project: Durable was one of many super-soldier projects instituted by the American armed forces – in this case, the Army – during the Vietnam era. Its goal was to render soldiers immune to pain and fatigue by blocking substantial parts of their nerve endings. Certain nerves, such as those in the hands, were left mainly intact.

Although Durable soldiers performed well in the field, the Army scrapped the project after several years due to numerous unanticipated side effects that compromised the subjects' efficiency, that could not be corrected. These included a leprosy-like inability to detect wounds

and infections, soldiers starving to death because their nervous systems didn't tell them they were hungry, and, most commonly, mental instability caused by the treatments (including various manifestations of violent hyperactivity and antisocial personality disorder). The only known survivor of the project still alive today is Mark "Pokerface" Knight, who works for the Card Shark organization.

PROJECT: JACKKNIFE

In the late 1960s, a group of rogue CIA scientists, disgusted with the limitations placed upon Project: Chrysalis by Mr. Grey, set up their own secret program to create a super-spy. A few whispered rumors in the intelligence community later claimed they were secretly financed, at least in part, by Colonel Nordstrom. For several years, they attempted to create a human clone for their purposes, but met with complete failure due to the limited state of bioengineering at that time.

Sometime in the early 1970s, these scientists obtained a two-and-a-half year old boy for use in their experiments. Sixteen years of chemical treatments, surgery, physical training, and psychological conditioning followed. The result was an unqualified success – the super-spy codenamed *Jackknife*. However, the project's success ultimately turned to failure when Jackknife went rogue in 1988 and established himself as a spy/assassin for hire. Today he's one of the world's most successful and sought-after assassins. Due to the failure of his psychological conditioning and the great cost associated with his creation, not to mention the rogue nature of the entire project, Project: Jackknife was halted. The CIA has never revived it, and the scientists involved have not been seen or heard from publicly since.

PROJECT: PRIDE

In 1978, the Army decided to get back into the super-soldier business. General Nordstrom contacted his old friend Lucius Grey at the CIA and set up a "joint venture" with the Agency to draw upon its increasing sophistication in the field of human enhancement studies. Scientists assigned to Project: Pride took human a fetus from the womb and raised it in a special incubator-like chamber, artificially aging it so it grew to adult size in just five years.

Christening him "Charlie Pride," the scientists subjected this person to the entire panoply of CIA mind-alteration and data implantation techniques. They built into him, from the ground up, an entire personality based around intense patriotism and slavish loyalty to his superiors. They also gave him a lifetime of false memories that indicated he'd been injected with a "super-soldier serum" during a Vietnam War-era project, had fought with extreme distinction in that war, and had since served the CIA and the Army on a variety of special operations missions around the globe. Along with these memories he was programmed with the skills he would need for his work. The knowledge was force-fed into him by computer so he could call it up as needed, but would otherwise "lay dormant" to avoid confusing or disturbing him.

When Pride scientists felt Charlie had reached the appropriate level of physical and mental development, they awakened him, explaining that he'd been in the hospital for an extended period while he recovered from severe wounds suffered on a mission in Africa. Thereafter he spent several years in intense physical training ("recuperation and field re-acclimation therapy") and was equipped with several high-tech weapons that had computers built into them.

By the late 1980s/early '90s, the CIA and the Army were using Charlie Pride – known primarily by the codename *American Flag* – all over the world. They sent him on suicidal combat/infiltration missions against numerous clandestine targets. He returned from more than a decade's worth of assignments, mission accomplished, in the late '90s. By that point, his handlers were worried that his personality programming was beginning to weaken, and that if it collapsed, his mind would revert to that of a young child. In 1993, he was "retired" and given a cover identity as an automobile dealer in Fell's Point, from where the Agency or Army could retrieve him if he were ever needed. Since then he has periodically acted as a vigilante, combating what he perceives as "un-American activities."

PROJECT: LEON

This was the CIA's own followup to Project: Pride. A thirteen-year-old autistic boy known only as "Leon" was subjected to psychological conditioning and data implantation methods developed during Pride. The goal was to create a super-spy able to "switch personalities" between several pre-defined personalities, thus creating the "ultimate cover." After twelve years of conditioning and training, he was sent into the field; all of his programmed identities saw extensive use. However, there were occasional accidental "personality shifts," and eventually he did not return from a mission. The CIA now believes that **[CLASSIFIED]**.

enhancement project") is one that attempts to somehow improve the performance of soldiers and spies, but more or less within normal human parameters – it doesn't try to give them superpowers, just make them function better. Put another way, super-soldier projects are much more "realistic," and thus appropriate for the world of *Dark Champions* – a world in which someone who can fly and fire energy bolts, the way Victory can, is far out of place.

PROJECT: SUPERIORITY

In 1996, the Army, pleased with the results of Project: Pride, decided to use the knowledge gained through that project to create its own super-soldier independent of the CIA. The goal of this program, dubbed Project: Superiority, was to use modern technology, medicine, science, and training methods to create soldiers who could (a) survive by themselves behind enemy lines, unsupported, for lengthy periods of time, (b) wreak immense havoc on the enemy while they were there, (c) withstand enormous amounts of pain and injury, and (d) kill without hesitation. In short, Superiority soldiers would be the ultimate commandos.

Subjects for the program, all volunteers, were obtained directly from new recruits, before they'd gone through basic training. The first step in the program was to provide them with basic survival and combat training. All recruits survived this stage. The second stage was the drug and surgery program designed to fundamentally alter the subject. The injections and toxic reactions to the implants killed five of the volunteers, leaving only one survivor: Mark Benning.

The second stage encompassed the majority of what was to make a Project: Superiority soldier so much better than an ordinary man. Through steroid injections and muscle grafts, Benning became immensely strong. Similar injections (and later training) increased his reflexes and stamina. Surgeons implanted specially-developed "organic plastic mesh" under his skin to give him a partial resistance to low-caliber bullets and other weapons, and a radio receiver/transmitter in his mastoid sinus so he could communicate with headquarters at all times. His digestive and gastric tracts were altered to allow him to derive nutriment from any organic substance (such as grass, tree bark, or fur) without harm. He was made able to withstand extremes of temperature and radiation.

Stage three of the Project was to train Benning to use his new body and mind properly. He learned everything he could about being a soldier, from stealthy movement, to tactics, to hand-to-hand combat. This stage also included intense psychological conditioning to accustom Benning to his new role and ensure his loyalty. The Army equipped Benning with the latest in weaponry, including a modified M-134 Minigun with several interchangeable helical ammunition magazines, a weapon so big only he can carry and use it.

Benning completed advanced training without any difficulties. But during his first field training exercise, he went berserk and fled, abandoning the Army altogether to become a high-priced mercenary warrior using the name SNAFU. Project: Superiority scientists theorize that his berserk fit resulted from an explosion-induced malfunction in the radio receiver/transmitter implanted in his mastoid sinus. This wrecked his psychological conditioning, leaving him with the advanced capabilities and training he'd received but none of the moral or patriotic imperatives.

Following Benning's defection, Project: Superiority was suspended. Scientists associated with the program believe it's still viable, particularly with the scientific advances seen in bio-engineering since 1996, but have yet to convince the military that it's worth the massive amount of funding it would require.

What the Future Holds

The American military and intelligence communities remain intrigued by the possibilities of human enhancement. General Nordstrom, the man who conceived of, led, or otherwise participated in so many of the super-soldier projects over the past fifty years retired when Project: Superiority was suspended. His centralizing influence on the Army's human enhancement research is now gone, and some people suspect that half a dozen programs, at varying stages and with varying levels of official sanction, are underway to create the next "super-soldier." The grapevine has even attached a name and description to one – the Lone Star Project, said to involve plans to implant miniature supercomputers and other equipment into the brains and bodies of soldiers – in other words, to create the very first actual cyborgs. Other programs supposedly involve genetic manipulation, various new technologies evolved from those used in Superiority, or advanced psychological programming.

Human Enhancement Projects of the Soviet Union

As in so many other areas, the Soviet Union lagged far behind the United States in its efforts to create super-soldiers, though not through lack of funding – millions of rubles were thrown away on experiments that proved utterly worthless.

PROJECT: WOLF

Project: Wolf, the USSR's first and longest-lasting super-soldier and super-spy project, began in the early 1960s. It was an attempt to use injections and/or surgical grafts to enhance human beings – augmented muscles and bones for enhanced strength and speed, primarily. Only a few crude "success" stories relieved years of abject failure, and most of the successes went insane after only short periods in the field. Nevertheless, the Soviets used their scarce resources well: their super-agents often lost their lives eliminating their American counterparts.

THE BOGATYR PROJECT

Named after the hero-warriors of Russian folktales, this program began in the early 1980s. It used chemical and psychological treatments to create agents who were stronger, smarter, faster, and more resistant to injury than typical humans. However, the program's successful "alumni" (known as *bogatyrs*) generally lagged behind American super-soldiers, having been created with technologies and methods already ten to twenty years outmoded in the West. Most were killed in the field, but more than a few are thought to have survived. Some may now be members of the Organizatsiya, or sell their services on the world mercenary market. A few FBI agents suspect that the Organizatsiya boss Rasputin is a bogatyr.

Human Enhancement Projects of the People's Republic of China

Virtually no one in the West knows whether the Chinese have created (or attempted to create) enhanced human agents. However, some members of the CIA believe the shadowy "Dragon Cadre" referred to in some intercepted transmissions is a unit composed of enhanced humans with martial arts training. Finding out more about Chinese advances in this field is a top priority in certain parts of the CIA and DIA.

Human Enhancement Projects of East Germany

The NPA (National Peoples' Army) and the Stasi, or East German secret police, are known to have established one human enhancement project, Operation *Eisenmensch* (Iron Man). Drawing on data "rescued" from Nazi scientists prior to the fall of Hitler's regime and the Nuremburg trials, Eisenmensch scientists used chemical and biological treatments, advanced surgical techniques, and mental conditioning to create agents with great strength, vicious cunning, and unparalleled ability to resist injury and pain. However, the Iron Men displayed a distressing tendency toward certain fatal physical conditions (heart attacks, brain aneurysms), to mental breakdown, and to premature senility. Experts in the American intelligence community think that perhaps as many as two dozen Iron Men were created, but it's unknown whether any of them survived to the fall of the Berlin Wall or beyond.

The Assassin's Art by W. Ross Watson

This martial art was developed from versions of ninjutsu and pentjak-silat, refined over many decades into its current form by a cabal of the world's finest assassins. Practical to the core, the cabal's name for their style is simply "The Assassin's Art", and it is whispered that it is only taught to those who have already killed a member of their own family. Although this style has remained a complete secret for many years, there are those who have used this style openly in recent times. Whether this heralds a change in the cabal's leadership, attitude, welfare, or all three, it is too early to tell.

Special Abilities:

Death Sense: Successful assassins often are able to tell how much force is required to slay an opponent. They prefer to use just the right amount… no more, no less. Assassins employed by the shadowy cabal who created this style have honed this ability to an even higher state. They can gauge an opponent's health and defenses to an uncanny degree. This ability can be represented by purchasing the powers Detect: Defenses and Detect: Current BODY and STUN, with the *Requires A Skill Roll* (Analyze Health, -½) Limitation.

Assassin's Art Maneuvers:

Quick Kill: This maneuver is designed to be extremely flexible. Nearly any type of attack, from stiffened fingers to the throat to a savage elbow strike to the base of the skull can be a Quick Kill. Assassins have been often known to purchase weapon elements to use with their style, and often employ them in conjunction with their maneuvers.

ASSASSIN'S ART MANEUVERS

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Choke Hold	½	4	-2	+0	Grab One Limb; 2d6 NND
Throat Crush	½	4	+0	+0	STR +4d6 Crush, Must Follow Grab
Defensive Strike	½	5	+1	+3	STR Strike
Fast Strike	½	4	+2	+0	STR +2d6 Strike
Kneecapper	½	5	-1	-2	Grab One Limb; HKA ½d6 (2 DC), Disable
Death Blow	½	4	-2	+0	HKA ½d6 (2 DC)
Legsweep	½	3	+2	-1	STR +1d6 Strike; Target Falls
Offensive Strike	½	5	-2	+1	STR +4d6 Strike
Martial Dodge	½	4	-	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
Martial Block	½	4	+2	+2	Block, Abort
Takeaway	½	5	+0	+0	Grab Weapon, +10 STR to take weapon away
Quick Kill	½	5	-2	-2	HKA ½d6 (2 DC); FMove

Skills:
Concealment
Disguise
Forensic Medicine
KS: Assassin's Art
Shadowing
Stealth
Tactics

Notes: The Choke Hold and Throat Crush maneuvers automatically target the throat, neither maneuver receiving any special benefit or penalty for doing so.

The Kneecapper maneuver has a hit location of 2d6+7 and typically grabs a leg in order to do damage.

artwork by Christopher Cooper

The Whisper of Kali

Background/History: Good and Evil, Darkness and Light. To everything, there is an opposite. One end of the spectrum is represented by the Sanctified Elder of the Resplendent Dragon school of martial arts, from whom only the brave and wise can learn. The Assassin's Cabal is the Sanctified Elder's counterpart, yang to his yin. As the Sanctified Elder represents his beliefs, so too does the Whisper of Kali stand for all that is evil and corrupt. She is death incarnate, or so she has been raised to believe.

The Whisper of Kali is the only name she has ever known since birth. The Cabal has raised her in almost complete isolation, subjecting the girl her entire life to a harsh regimen of training and discipline. Her earliest memories are of death and pain, as she was tested every year of her life in her ability and willingness to kill.

Every day for the Whisper has been hard, and she has grown hard in response. She has known no parents but faceless instructors who have taught her how to harm and destroy. She has known no friends but mysterious employers who have enslaved her since she was old enough to walk, who control her every move. She has known no freedom or joy except in the thrill of murder, where she can cut loose with all of her training and abilities to the fullest extent. She is a living weapon, and like the goddess for whom she is named, an avatar of death.

Personality/Motivation: The Whisper of Kali lives to inflict pain, suffering, and death. She harbors a secret loneliness deep in her heart, but she regards such feelings as a weakness and aggressively seeks to distance herself from them.

The Whisper of Kali seeks to be the best assassin in the world. With her dark ch'i powers and martial arts training, she has a very good chance of claiming that title. However, she often seeks to prove herself by taking on dangerous and difficult assignments, just to prove to herself and the world that she deserves the fear and apprehension that go along with her name.

Quote: (whispered) "I am the Whisper of Kali… and my voice is the last thing you'll ever hear."

Powers/Tactics: The Whisper of Kali possesses many powers and abilities to assist her in her profession. She is among the top martial artists in the world, with a wealth of technical training that easily qualifies her to be a master in her field. Her moves and training are not all that make her deadly, however. Her body has become a receptacle for dark ch'i, corrupted life energy that adds great power to her blows and sharpens her senses towards the ebb and flow of existence.

Her dark ch'i manifests itself as a dark purple energy glow around her eyes, hands, and feet. This energy flickers whenever she strikes something using her powers, and with it she can deliver blows that will smash brick, bone, and steel with astonishing ease.

Her link to dark ch'i also gives her a supernatural insight into life and death. With a glance, she can discern how healthy a person is, including the amount of STUN and BODY they currently possess and the normal maximums of both. Her ability to sense a person's health also tells her when a person is likely to die soon, giving her an awareness of impending death that unnerves many of her targets.

Her awareness of ch'i helps her find weak spots in an opponent's defense, which she takes advantage of ruthlessly. In addition, she has learned the dreaded *dim mak*, the death touch technique with which she can render a target helpless, slowly dying as his body's life energies begin to flicker and fade away.

The Whisper of Kali has been trained like a ninja, to sneak into her quarry's home and slay him where he believes himself to be least vulnerable. She is very proficient at hiding and leaving no trace or sound wherever she goes. She is also exceptionally nimble, able to run as fast as a deer and leap like a gazelle.

Campaign Use: Anyone hunted by the Whisper of Kali should consider himself lucky to still be alive. She is ruthless when "on the job" and stops at nothing to carry out her mission. She will not be distracted easily and uses any and all methods at her disposal to catch the Hunted alone. Once a confrontation begins, she cuts loose with everything in her arsenal of skills and martial arts to reduce her target to a corpse. If another Assassin is the Hunted, she will most likely be simply competing with him, and will restrain herself to simple one-upmanship.

To make The Whisper of Kali more powerful, add 10 points to her strength, raise her DEX to 27, and add 5 points to her PD and ED. To scale her down, reduce her combat skill levels to a maximum of 3, lower her strength to 15 and her extra damage classes should come down to a total of 4.

Appearance: The Whisper of Kali is a stunningly beautiful Asian woman, average in height with a slender and athletic build. She has long black hair and disdains any sort of costume or mask. She normally operates in a black bodysuit, but is just as comfortable entering into one of her many disguises in order to keep her target off guard. When her dark ch'i is manifesting, her eyes and hands blaze with a flickering purple light, and there is an indescribable aura of evil and dread that surrounds her.

PLOT SEEDS

Any heroes linked to the Sanctified Elder or the Resplendent Dragon style of martial arts may have heard of the Assassin's Cabal. Perhaps a hero might even be the chosen champion of the Sanctified Elder, and in that case, there's no doubt that his path would soon cross with the Whisper of Kali.

The Whisper of Kali is also a professional assassin. If a group of heroes has a particularly well-connected and wealthy adversary, he may purchase the services of the Whisper of Kali, in which case the heroes should watch their backs very closely!

Finally, it's possible that the origin of the Whisper of Kali is linked to one of the heroes. Perhaps there was a younger sister in the hero's life who vanished very young, or perhaps the hero himself was once linked to the Assassin's cabal. In either case, the mysterious nature of the Whisper's early past makes it easy for a GM to write her in anywhere he pleases in his campaign.

The Whisper of Kali

Xopher

The Whisper of Kali

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 HTH [2]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
20	CON	20	13-	
20	BODY	20	13-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll: 13-
20	EGO	20	13-	ECV: 7
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
20	COM	5	13-	
15	PD	11		Total: 15 PD (0rPD)
15	ED	11		Total: 15 ED (0rED)
6	SPD	30		Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
8	REC	0		
60	END	10		
55	STUN	15		

Total Characteristics Cost: 202

Movement: Running: 12"/24"
  Leaping: 12"/24"
  Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
15	*Death Sense I:* Detect Health, Discriminatory, Analyze, Ranged; Requires an Analyze Health Roll (-½)	0
7	*Death Sense II:* Detect Current BODY and STUN, Ranged; Requires an Analyze Health Roll (-½)	0
11	*Death Sense III:* Precognitive Clairsentience (Sight group); Only Reveals if Someone's Death is Near (-2), Vague and Unclear (-½)	4
22	*Feel the Flow of Life I:* Spatial Awareness	0
12	*Feel the Flow of Life II:* Detect Ch'i, Ranged, Sense	0
30	*Sense the Flaw:* Find Weakness with Assassin's Art, 13-	0
37	*Dim Mak Mastery:* Drain BODY 10d6 **plus** Drain STR 3d6, Invisible to Sight and Hearing Groups (+¾), Time Delay (+¼), Delayed Return Rate (BODY Returns at 5 per Week (+1¾); Gradual Effect (1d6 BODY per Day, -1¾), Can Be Cured by Chinese Healing (-¼), Requires a Chinese Healing Roll (No Active Point Penalty, but 16+ Automatically Misses, -¼), Attacker Must Make a Special Sequence of Five Blows Against Target (-1), 2 Charges (-1½), Activation Roll 14- (-½)	13
24	*Superior Defense Technique I:* Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%; Must Be Aware of Attack (-¼), Does Not Work against Dim Mak (-0)	0
24	*Superior Defense Technique II:* Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 50%; Must Be Aware of Attack (-¼), Does Not Work against Dim Mak (-0)	0
5	*Superior Movement Technique:* Leaping +8" (12" Total); Requires an Acrobatics Roll (-½)	2
12	*Superior Running Technique:* Running +6" (12" Total)	2
8	*Pass Without Trace:* Gliding 12"; Ground Gliding (-¼), No Noncombat Movement (-¼)	0
6	*Shadow Technique:* Lack of Weakness (-6) for Normal Defenses	0
25	*Martial Arts Overdrive:* +10 with Hand-to-Hand Combat; Costs END (-½), Increased END Cost (2x END, -½)	10
10	*Dark Ch'i:* +28 PRE; Costs END (-½), Increased END Cost (x2, -½), Linked to Martial Arts Overdrive (-½), Visible (-¼)	6

Martial Arts: Assassin's Art

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4	Choke Hold	-2	+0	Grab One Limb; 6d6 NND
4	Throat Crush	+0	-2	16d6 Crush, Must Follow Grab
5	Defensive Strike	+1	+3	12d6 Strike
4	Fast Strike	+2	+0	14d6 Strike
5	Kneecapper	-1	-2	Grab One Limb; HKA 3d6+1, Disable
4	Death Blow	-2	+0	HKA 3d6+1
3	Legsweep	+2	-1	13d6 Strike; Target Falls
5	Offensive Strike	-2	+1	16d6 Strike
4	Martial Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
4	Martial Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
5	Takeaway	+0	+0	Grab Weapon, 70 STR to take weapon away
5	Quick Kill	-2	-2	HKA 3d6+1; FMove
32	+8 Damage Classes for Assassin's Art (already added in)			

Talents

15 *Swift as Death:* +10 DEX to Act First with All Attacks

Skills
13 +4 DCV; Requires an Acrobatics Roll (-½)

 7 Acrobatics 15-
 7 Analyze Health 15-
 7 Breakfall 15-
 7 Concealment 15-
 7 Disguise 15-
 7 Forensic Medicine 15-
 3 KS: Assassin's Art 13-
 7 KS: Chinese Healing 15-
 3 Seduction 13-
11 Shadowing 17-
 7 Sleight of Hand 15-
11 Stealth 17-
 3 Streetwise 13-
 3 Tactics 13-

Total Powers & Skills cost: 450

Total Cost: 652

200+ Disadvantages
10 Distinctive Features: Aura of Evil (Not Concealable, Unusual Senses)
10 Distinctive Features: Assassin's Art Style (Not Concealable, Recognizable, Large Group)
20 Hunted: Assassin's Cabal 14- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
15 Hunted: Rival Assassins 8- (As Pow, NCI, Kill)
15 Hunted: Sanctified Elder 8- (Mo Pow, Capture)
10 Physical Limitation: Unable to Speak above a Whisper (Frequently, Greatly)
15 Psychological Limitation: Casual Killer (Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Loyal to the Assassin's Cabal (Common, Strong)
15 Psychological Limitation: Cruel and Spiteful (Common, Strong)
15 Reputation: Incredibly Lethal and Implacable Assassin, 14- (Extreme, Limited Group)
10 Rivalry: Professional (Other Assassins, for Prestige)
252 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 652

Ⓧ

Blood Brothers by Michael Surbrook

Vampires and Other Creatures that Drink Blood from Around the World

> *Count Dracula:* This is very old wine. I hope you will like it.
> *Johnathan Harker:* Aren't you drinking?
> *Count Dracula:* I never drink wine.
> *Dracula*

The belief in dead (or undead) beings that prey on the blood of the living goes back for centuries, and one can find accounts of vampires, or vampire-like beings, in cultures the world over. Not all of these creatures are "undead" blood-drinkers, however. Some of these vampiric creations are human witches, evil spirits, demons, monsters, or other supernatural entities.

In many cases a certain fear of the dead, as well as strong beliefs in the inherent magical power of blood, led to the creation of vampire myths. Many cultures blamed the vampire or a vampiric creature for otherwise unexplained deaths, especially of young children. In other areas, the vampire myth was used to reinforce the need for specific burial practices, by stating that an unburied corpse (or one that wasn't properly blessed) would rise as a vampire. Finally, vampire tales were also used as a warning to young people – especially young women – in order to maintain proper social conventions needed for survival in small villages.

It was in Eastern Europe that the vampire with which we are most familiar found its strongest adherents. The Slavic peoples believed in vampires utterly, creating an entire mythology detailing the habits of the vampire, as well as its appearance, ways to protect against it, how to detect one, and how to destroy one. In general, a life of evil could cause one to rise as a vampire; garlic was commonly used as protection; an undecomposed corpse was a sure sign of vampirism; and the best way to destroy the body was through staking or burning. These beliefs were so strong that vampire hysteria swept through regions of Eastern Europe several times during the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, resulting in the mass desecration of graves and the burning of exhumed bodies.

The Vampire in Europe

> *Loy Colton:* Caleb, those people back there, they wasn't normal. Normal folks, they don't spit out bullets when you shoot 'em, no sir.
> *Near Dark*

The concept of the vampire filtered into Western Europe slowly. In the twelfth century, Englishman William of Newburgh reported a number of cases where the dead had returned to attack the living. No further reports of this kind surfaced, however, until January 7, 1732, when an Austrian physician named Johannes Fluckinger published an account of his investigations of vampirism in Serbia. According to the report, a number of deaths in the village of Medvegia had been blamed on a man by the name of Arnold Paul, who himself claimed to have bitten by a vampire. When his body was dug up, it was found to be well-preserved and fresh blood flowed from the body when it was staked. A number of other bodies were then unearthed and four that were considered unnaturally fresh were burned.

The report was quickly published in publications all across Europe. The report's appearance in *The London Journal* and *The Gentleman's Magazine* in 1732 is thought to be the point at which the word vampire (or vampyre) first entered usage in the English language. The story was widely read and circulated, and created much debate as to how one could rationally explain the reports. A number of theories were presented, and in some places laws were enacted to prevent the exhuming of suspected vampires and the burning of corpses. On top of all this, French naturalist Georges Louis Leclerc de Buffon named and classified the South American "vampire bat." He chose the name "vampire" due to the bat's habit of drinking blood from sleeping animals and people.

In the 19th Century, the idea of the vampire had become so ensconced in the popular imagination that a number of novels and short stories were written. They included John Polidori's "The Vampire," James Malcolm Rymer's *Varney the Vampyre*, and Sheridan Le Fanu's "Carmilla." These stories all culminated with the publication in 1897 of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. Stoker's novel, with its powerful aristocratic villain and such memorable supporting characters as R. N. Renfield and

artwork by Josh Richter

Vampires are known by an almost bewildering variety of names throughout Europe. A sampling of these names include: *baobban sith*, *Bluatsauger*, *callicantzaros*, *eretik*, *kosac*, *lampir*, *lupi manari*, *mulo*, *Nachttoter*, *Nachtzeher*, *nelapsi*, *obur*, *opyri*, *sanguisuga*, *strix*, *tenatz*, *upierzyca*, *upir*, *upyr*, *ustrel*, *vampir*, *vapir*, *vjesci*, *vjeszczi*, *vrykolakas*, *vukodlak*, *vurvulak*, and *wupji*.

Abraham Van Helsing, helped define the image of the modern vampire.

With the rise of the motion picture industry, the final touches on the popular image of the vampire were established. In 1931 Universal Pictures released *Dracula*, starring Bela Lugosi in the title role. It was his depiction of the Count that established what most people consider to be the classical "look" of the vampire. Lugosi's Dracula was an aristocratic figure that dressed in formal evening wear with a long flowing cape, had a strange foreign accent, and excellent, well-bred manners. Even today, Lugosi's portrayal of Dracula is what most people expect a vampire to look and act like.

Historical Accounts of Vampires

> *Spike:* I'm a vampire. I know something about evil.
> *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (TV Series)

The earliest written accounts of vampires in Western Europe date from the late twelfth century. In 1196 William of Newburgh wrote his *Historia Rerum Angeicarum*, where he reported several accounts of the dead coming back to attack the living. He called this creature a *sanguisuga*, a Latin word meaning "bloodsucker." These attacks were stopped by digging up and burning the bodies of the individuals believed to be responsible for the attacks.

Arnold Paul: The case of Arnold Paul (or Paole) is possibly the most famous vampire incident of the 1700s. It happened during a rash of reputed vampire assaults that occurred all through the end of the seventeenth century and up to the middle of the eighteenth. Paul's case gained a great deal of notoriety and helped create a great deal of interest in the vampire phenomena in Western Europe.
Arnold Paul was born in Serbia, north of Belgrade. He served as a soldier in the Austrian Empire until 1727, at which point he returned to his hometown of Medvegia. There, he bought some land with the intent of becoming a farmer.

Although said to be good natured and honest, it was also reported that Paul was pessimistic and moody. Eventually, Paul revealed the reason for his occasionally despondent state. While serving on the Turkish front, Paul had been attacked by a vampire. Paul had managed to kill the vampire after tracking it back to its grave, and tried to prevent any chance of his rising as a vampire by eating dirt from the vampire's grave, as well as bathing his wounds in the vampire's blood. Shortly after revealing his secret, Paul died when he fell from a hay wagon. He was buried soon after, with no apparent precautions made against his possible return as a vampire.

Within a few weeks of Paul's burial, he was seen moving about the village. Four people who had reported being visited by Paul died. The villagers grew panicky, and 40 days after his burial, Paul's grave was opened. The body was said to be fresh, appearing as if it had recently died. There was new skin growing under the dead skin, the nails had grown long and the body gushed blood when cut. The corpse was then staked, beheaded, and then burned. Paul's four victims were likewise dug up, decapitated, and burned.

In 1731, 17 people died in the space of three months. Once again the townspeople suspected a vampire. A man named Milo, who had reportedly attacked a young girl after he had died, was dug up and his corpse found to be fresh, much like Paul's had been four years earlier. At this point, it was stated that Paul had attacked a number of local cows while a vampire, and that the recently deceased had eaten these animals, thus becoming vampires themselves. The corpses of the 17 recent victims were then dug up, and all those that showed signs of vampirism were staked and burned.

The account of Arnold Paul and the vampires of Medvegia were documented in an extensive report by Regimental Field Surgeon Johannes Fluckinger. He traveled to Medvegia in December of 1731, and witnessed the exhuming of Milo's body. Gathering as complete an account as possible, Fluckinger published his report, and by March of 1732 had a bestseller.

Peter Plogojowitz: Plogojowitz, a farmer who lived in the village of Kisolova, Serbia, died in September of 1728 at the age of 62. Three days later, Plogojowitz returned home and asked his son for food. Two days after that, he returned and again asked for food. This time, his son refused the request and was found dead the next day. Following the son's death, close to ten other villagers died, at the rate of about one a week. Many of the deceased reported being visited by Plogojowitz during the night, during which he had bitten them and drank their blood.

At this point a number of governmental officials were brought in and the grave of Peter Plogojowitz was opened. Plogojowitz's body was reported as being fresh, lacking any trace of smell, his hair and nails had grown out, and a new layer of skin was found under the old skin. Worst of all, Plogojowitz had traces of fresh blood around his mouth.
Plogojowitz was quickly staked, at which point a great deal of blood flowed out of his body, and the body was then burned. The graves of Plogojowitz's other presumed victims were then opened. While none showed signs of vampirism, the villagers took the precautionary measures of placing garlic in the victims' mouths and whitethorn around the bodies.

The Croglin Grange Vampire: The story of the Croglin Grange vampire is often cited as an account of a "real" vampire, although many of the "facts" have proven difficult to verify. The case is said to have occurred between 1875 and 1876, but at least one report places it as far back as 1680. At any rate, the tale appeared in the book *Story of My Life* written by August Hare in the late 1890s.

Croglin Grange is a manor house located in Cumberland, England. The house, owned by the Fisher family, was rented to the Cranswell brothers and their sister. One evening, the sister reported seeing a humanoid creature with glowing eyes approach the window, eventually entering and biting her on the neck. Initially paralyzed with fear, the woman then screamed, at which point her brothers arrived and the creature fled.

The Cranswells left Croglin Grange for a vacation, but eventually returned. That spring, the vampire reappeared, but this time found the brothers waiting for it. The brothers were armed with pistols, and the vampire was shot in the leg as it fled. Having tracked the vampire to a vault in the local cemetery, the two brothers entered the crypt and found all the coffins in disarray – with one exception. When this coffin was opened, a body was revealed that bore a fresh gunshot wound on the leg. The corpse was promptly burned.

Research into the account has determined that there is no Croglin Grange, although there is a Croglin High Hall and a Croglin Low Hall. It has also been pointed out that the description of the vampire and the story itself is very similar to the first chapter of *Varney the Vampyre*, which was written by James Malcolm Rymer in the 1840s.

The Highgate Vampire: The events surrounding the Highgate Cemetery vampire took place over a period of 15 years, from 1967 to 1983. Located in the Highgate section of London, the cemetery, officially known as the Cemetery of Saint James, was established in 1839.

Initially, the Highgate area was rumored to be haunted by a ghost that was only seen at night. Then, a young girl by the name of Elizabeth Wojdyla reported having seen the dead rise out of several graves. She also reported having dreams where some sort of evil entity tried to enter her bedroom. Eventually, she reported that the figure had entered her room, and she discovered two small puncture marks on her neck. A vampire researcher named Sean Manchester placed crosses and garlic in her room, at which point Elizabeth recovered.

In late 1969, the Highgate case took a dark turn when it was discovered that the cemetery and a local park had been used for the ritual killing of small animals. Even more disturbing was the fact that some of these animals had been drained of blood. Manchester himself then examined the case of another young woman who reported the same events as Elizabeth Wojdyla. Following her while she walked in her sleep, Manchester trailed her to a group of burial vaults. In March of 1970, Manchester (accompanied by two companions) entered the vaults to find three empty coffins. They placed garlic and a cross in each coffin and sprinkled the vault with salt and holy water.

In August of 1970, the body of a recently deceased woman was discovered in the cemetery. The body been decapitated and burned, apparently in an attempt to destroy a presumed vampire. Shortly thereafter, the police arrested two self-proclaimed vampire hunters. As for Manchester, he entered another crypt, where he claimed to have discovered an actual vampire. Manchester, not willing to violate English laws against mutilation of the dead by staking the corpse, instead sealed the grave with garlic and cement.

A fourth vampire hunter entered the scene in 1970 by the name of David Farrant. He entered the cemetery with the intent of staking the vampire, which he claimed to have seen, but was arrested. He was convicted of breaking into two of the cemetery's crypts. Eight years later, in 1978, he claimed the entire vampire incident was a hoax that he himself had created. Manchester denied this claim, pointing out that he had recorded incidents for several years prior to Farrant's arrival.

The entire affair seemed to come to an end in 1973, when Manchester investigated a nearby mansion that was said to be haunted. Entering the house, he and his companions discovered a coffin in the basement. Taking the coffin outside into the backyard, Manchester opened it, only to discover the same vampire he had sealed away four years earlier. He then staked the corpse and burned the coffin. Shortly thereafter, the mansion was torn down and an apartment complex built in its stead.

All seemed normal until 1980, when dead animals, drained of their blood, appeared in the Finchley area. Believing this to be the work of a vampire created by the original Highgate Vampire, Manchester returned to the area. His investigations eventually led him to believe that a woman he called Lusia was responsible. In the fall of 1982, Manchester entered Great Northern London Cemetery, where Lusia was buried. There, Manchester encountered what he described as a spider-like creature the size of a cat. Killing it by driving a stake through its body, Manchester watched as it turned back into the body of Lusia with the rising of the sun. Replacing her corpse in her grave, Manchester felt he had resolved the case of the Highgate Vampire.

Real-World Vampires

> *Cordelia:* I finally get invited to a nice place with no mirrors and lots of curtains. Hey, you're a vampire.
> *Russell Winters:* What? No, I'm not.
> *Cordelia:* Are too.
> *Russell Winters:* I don't know what you're talking about.
> *Cordelia:* I'm from Sunnydale. We had our own Hellmouth. I think I know a vampire when… I'm alone with him in his fortress-like home.
> <div align="right">*Angel* (TV Series)</div>

With the popularity of the vampire in modern culture and the imagination, it is not surprising that certain real-world figures have become closely associated with the vampire mythos. Some people have become so obsessed with the idea of the vampire that they have considered themselves to be vampires, even going so far as to drink the blood of other people and animals.

Vlad Dracula (a.k.a. Vlad the Impaler, Vlad Tepes): There is no one person more associated with vampires than Vlad Dracula. Also known as Vlad the Impaler for his preferred method of executing his enemies, Vlad lived in the mid-to-late fifteenth century. He was a native of Wallachia – a part of Romania – and a member of the royal house. Although he was only prince of Wallachia for a short time – no more than eight years total – he left a lasting impression that survives even until today.

As can be seen by the similarity of their names, Bram Stoker's Dracula was partially derived from the fifteenth century prince. Dr. Van Helsing even goes so far to state that "[Dracula] must, indeed, have been that Voivode Dracula who won his name against the Turk, over the great rivers on the very frontier of Turkeyland." Vlad Dracula did, in fact, battle the Turks during his reign, and attempted to drive them from the Danube Valley. Because of his campaigns against the Turks Vlad is still honored as a hero in Wallachia and Transylvania.

Dracula itself is a name derived from the Romanian word "drac", meaning either "dragon" or "devil." Vlad's father was Vlad Dracul, and a member of the Christian Order of the Dragon, which was dedicated to fighting the Moslem Turks. Thus, Dracula means "son of Dracul" or "son of the dragon (or devil)."

When he assumed the throne of Wallachia in 1456, Vlad Dracula began a campaign of terror in an attempt to break the power of the merchant boyers (who he held responsible for the death of his father and brother), as well as solidify his position as prince. Vlad also wanted to create a modern principality within Romania, free of outside influences such as German merchants and the Roman Catholic Church. Central to his tactics was the use of tall stakes to impale his victims. Vlad favored this method of punishment to such a degree that he became known as Vlad "Tepes" or "the Impaler." It is estimated he killed over 40,000 people in only six years, an impressive number when you consider that his subjects numbered only a half-million.

Vlad was deposed in 1461 and ended up a captive in Hungary. He remained there until 1475 at which time he retook the Wallachian throne. Vlad second reign was very short, however. Unable to truly secure his position and lacking in allies, Vlad was assassinated in late 1476 or early 1477.

Elizabeth Bathory: Countess Elizabeth Bathory, a native of what is now the Slovak Republic, was born in 1560. She grew up in Transylvania and as a child was noted for being subject to seizures and fits of violent anger. Her cousin, Stephen, ascended to the throne of Transylvania in 1571, while Elizabeth married Count Ferenc Nadasy in 1575. After her marriage, she moved to Castle Sarvar, the estate of the Nadasy family.

While at Castle Nadasy, Elizabeth was responsible for managing the affairs of the house while her husband was away (which was often, since he was a soldier). It was at this time that Elizabeth began to exhibit her traits of cruelty. As head of the house, it was her duty to discipline the staff of the household. This task Elizabeth took to with a passion, engaging in punishments that shocked even her contemporaries.

Elizabeth took great joy in the torture or execution of her victims, inflicting extreme punishments both for actual infractions of her rules as well as anything for which she could find an excuse. One of her winter tortures involved stripping a victim naked, taking them out into the snow and throwing water upon them until they froze to death. Elizabeth's husband, Ferenc, occasionally joined these torture sessions. At one point during the summer, he had a nude woman coated in honey and left outside to be bitten to death by insects.

After her husband's death in 1604, Elizabeth moved to a manor house in Cachitce. There she was joined by Erzsi Majorova, who aided her in her activities. Because word of her actions had spread, Elizabeth found it hard to hire young girls as servants. Following Erzsi's advice, Elizabeth killed a young noble woman, and attempted to cover the crime by calling it a suicide.

Arrested in 1610, Elizabeth was accused of being a werewolf and a vampire. It was said that she drained the blood from her victims and

bathed in it in order to retain her youthful looks (and apparently Elizabeth Bathory was a very beautiful woman). When she was placed on trial in 1611, a register of 650 names was entered as evidence; it lead to her conviction and a sentence of life imprisonment in solitary confinement. Placed in a small room in Castle Cachitce with no windows and only small slits for food and air, Elizabeth survived only until 1614.

Other "Real" Vampires

A number of people have committed horrific vampiric crimes over the years. Many seem to have suffered from a condition called hematomania, a fetish that requires the regular consumption of human blood. Some people drank blood because they thought it gave them power. Others claimed to like the taste, or felt they needed to drink blood because they were, in fact, vampires. Some went a step further and actually consumed some of the flesh of their victims. A few of these famous real-world vampires include:

Sergeant Françoise Bertrand: In 1849, Bertrand was arrested in Paris for opening graves and eating the corpses. The book *The Werewolf of London* was modeled on his actions.

Fritz Haarman: Known as the "Vampire of Hanover," Haarman was a homosexual serial killer who lured young men to his home before slaying them. In 1920, Haarman met one Hans Grans, who became his lover and helped Haarman in his crimes. Following this meeting, Haarman began drinking the blood of his victims.

Upon his arrest, more than 20 corpses were found in and around his residence. Haarman was charged with the murders of 24 men, but it is believed that he killed more than 50. Convicted of numerous counts of murder, Haarman was executed April 15, 1925.

Peter Kürten: The so-called "Monster of Düsseldorf," Kürten was also known as the "Düsseldorf Vampire." A serial killer with a fascination for blood, Kürten first killed at the age of nine. Eight years later he tried to rape a young woman and was sent to prison. He was in an out of jail constantly for a variety of crimes over the next few years. Finally, from 1929-30, Kürten went on a full-fledged killing spree. His murders baffled police because Kürten constantly changed his method of killing his victims. He was finally apprehended in May of 1930 and executed in 1931.

James Brown: An American seaman, Brown was arrested in 1967 after he was discovered sucking the blood from a slain crewman. The drained corpse of a second crewmember was also found on board Brown's fishing ship. Sent to prison, Brown then killed two fellow prisoners and drank their blood.

Brown was then transferred to the National Asylum in Washington, D.C., where he was kept in a padded cell.

Richard Chase: Chase killed a number of people between December 1977 and January 1978. Each time he drank the victim's blood. Arrested in late January, Chase claimed to have drunk blood in order to improve his physical health. It was discovered that Chase had also drunk the blood of animals for a number of years. Convicted of multiple murders, Chase committed suicide in 1980.

Assorted Vampiric Creatures from Around the World

> *Grandpa:* Something I never could stomach about Santa Carla, all the damn vampires!
>
> *The Lost Boys*

Asasabonsam: An African vampire, the creature is found in the myths of the Ashanti people of Ghana. It is described as being humanoid in appearance – albeit very tall and long-legged – with teeth of solid iron. Dwelling in the deep forest, the *asasabonsam* sits in trees and captures the unwary with its hooked feet. Supposedly they feed by biting their victims on the thumb.

Aswang: A vampire of the Philippines, the *aswang* is a woman by day and a vampire by night. In the evening, an *aswang* will rub itself with a specially prepared salve that will allow it to transform into a large bird. Landing on the roof of a victim's home, the *aswang* will use its long tongue to drink its victim's blood. Once sated, the *aswang* will return home to wash off the salve, becoming a normal human once more.

Azeman: This Surinam vampire is a man or woman who removes their skin, transforms into a ball of blue light, and travels about preying on family and neighbors. Laying a broom across the doorway will keep the *azeman* out, as she cannot cross it. Catching the *azeman* can be accomplished by piling several brooms on the floor. The *azeman* must count each bristle and if still at it come daybreak, will be killed by the light of the rising sun. Scattering corn or rice on the floor works as well, as the *azeman* must pick up and count each grain. Finally, if one can locate the dried skin, coating it with pepper or salt will keep the *azeman* from using it.

The vampire is also known as an *asema*.

Baobban Sith: This Scottish fairy-vampire can have several forms – such as a crow or a raven – but usually appears as a beautiful young woman. In human form, they wear long green dresses to hide their legs, which end in deer's hooves. She entices men to dance with her for a time before falling on them and drinking their

blood. The *baobban sith* is also known as the *glaistig* and is said to be a form of water-fairy.

Baital: This Indian creature is also called a *vetala*. It is a spirit that possesses and animates corpses. In its real form it is a mix of bat and human standing about four feet in height.

Bluatsauger: The vampire of Bavaria, the *Bluatsauger* ("bloodsucker") can be created when those who practice witchcraft, have lived an immoral life, commit suicide or who have never been baptized die. Allowing an animal (or a nun!) to jump or step over a grave can also lead to the deceased becoming a vampire. Finally, eating the meat of an animal that was killed by wolves can lead to vampirism.

If a *Bluatsauger* is known to be in the area, one should stay indoors at night, place garlic at the windows and doors and set hawthorn around the house. Painting white spots (or eyes) over the eyes of an all-black dog will serve to drive a vampire away. To kill the *Bluatsauger* one should stake it through the heart and place garlic in the mouth.

In northern Germany the *Bluatsauger* is called the *Nachtzehrer* or "night waster."

Bruxa: The *bruxa* is a female Portuguese vampire-witch (a male witch is a *bruxo*) that is said to prey upon small children. She is capable of shape changing into a variety of animal forms, such as an ant, dove, duck, goose, or rat, and will use these forms in order to get close to her intended prey. Interestingly, the *bruxa's* powers only work between the hours of midnight and two a.m. The *bruxa* is said to gather at crossroads on Tuesdays and Fridays, where they will worship Satan, the source of their powers. These two days are also known to be the days that *lobishomen* – the Portuguese werewolf – changes shape, and the *bruxa* is often associated with the *lobishomen.*

Various methods are employed to defend against the possible attack of a *bruxa*. A steel nail driven into the ground will keep one away, as will a pair of scissors under a child's pillow. Garlic is also considered a protective substance and is often sewn into the clothing of a child. Numerous incantations can be used to guard against the *bruxa*.

The *bruxa* is known as *bruja* in Spain, *strega* in Italy, and *tlahuelpuchi* in Mexico.

Callicantzaros: This Greek vampire is the destined fate of children born in the week between Christmas and New Year's Day. Any such child is treated with fear and suspicion, for it will rise as a *callicantzaros* after death, and the *callicantzaros* is noted to be a very violent form of vampire.

The *callicantzaros* is only active on Christmas Day and a week to 12 days afterwards. During the rest of the year it exists in the underworld. When active, it can be recognized by its wild appearance and long talons. It is also very strong, as its favored method of feeding is to tear its victims to shreds.

Churel: This Indian vampire is known by many names, including *alvantin, jakhai, jakhin, mukai* and *nagulai*. The *churel* is created when a woman dies a sudden and unnatural death. If she had been mistreated in life, she will rise as a *churel* and attack her former family, draining the blood of the males. She also seduces young men, offering them food, which, if eaten, would allow her to keep him captive until dawn. When the young man finally was released, it would be as an old man. A *churel* can be identified by her feet, which are reversed so that the heel is in the front and the toes are in the back.

In order to prevent a woman from rising as a *churel*, many methods are employed to secure her corpse. The body is buried in a specific spot, and is usually removed from the home by a side door. By not using the front door, it is believed that the *churel* will not be able to find it's way back inside. Iron nails may be placed at doorways, and millet seeds are scattered about the road. The *churel* is forced to count the seeds when she encounters them and will be kept busy until dawn. In some parts of India, the corpse will be nailed into the coffin, peppers will be placed in the eyes, and the legs will be broken or chained together.

Cihuateteo: A vampire described by the Aztecs, the *cihuateteo* was created when a woman died during childbirth. Wandering about at night, they will attack children, leaving them ill with disease. *Cihuateteo* are said to gather at crossroads, and can be killed by sunlight if they remain at a crossroads until dawn. It is a common practice to leave offerings of food at a local crossroads to placate the *cihuateteo*.

Colo-Colo: Found in the folklore of the Aracucanian people of Chile, the *colo-colo* is a monstrous creature hatched from the egg of a cockerel. At night it hovers over its sleeping victims, drinking their saliva until they die from fever.

Dearg-dul: This is a vampire found in Ireland. It is said that building a cairn of stones on the *dearg-dul's* grave will destroy it. Some legends state that the *dearg-dul* takes the appearance of a beautiful young woman. She will seduce male travelers, drinking the man's blood when she brings him in for a kiss.

Lampir: The *lampir* is a Bosnian vampire. It is also called a *vukodlak*, especially in Croatia. The activities of a *lampir* are often connected with outbreaks of disease. If an unknown disease infects a community, the blame is placed upon a *lampir*. The first person to succumb to the disease is considered to be the *lampir* and any others who die are its victims. The *lampir* is disposed of by burning.

Langsuyar: This Malaysian vampire is very similar to the *pontianak*. It is formed when a woman gives birth to a stillborn child. Wracked with grief, she will fly into the trees, where she will prey on the children of others. The *langsuyar* is said to be very beautiful, with long black hair to her ankles, a green dress, long fingernails and a hole in her neck through which she drinks the blood of her victims.

Women who die during childbirth are also believed to become *langsuyars*. To keep the *langsuyar* from rising, a needle is thrust in the palm of the hand, eggs are placed under the arms, and glass beads are set in the mouth. One can also capture a *langsuyar* by cutting off her hair and fingernails and placing them in the hole in its neck. At this point, the *langsuyar* can be taken as a wife.

Leanan-sidhe: The *leanan-sidhe* is a fairy that inhabits the Isle of Man. She is the patron of poets, and seduces men in order to drink their blood. Her name can also be spelled *leanhaun sidhe*, and is pronounced either *lan-awn-shee* or *lee-annan she*.

Lidérc: In Hungary, there is no widespread belief in vampires. Instead, Hungarians describe the existence of a creature called the *lidérc*. The *lidérc* is a supernatural being similar to the succubus, in that it preys upon humans, seducing a potential victim and then killing them through exhaustive sexual congress. To aid in its seduction attempts, the *lidérc* can appear as a man or a woman, an animal or a bright light. Interestingly enough, the *lidérc* is said to exist in all of these shapes at the same time, alternating its appearance depending on who is watching. In order to defend oneself against the *lidérc*, one should place a garter on the bedroom door and scatter garlic around the room.

Loogaroo: This vampire is found in Haiti and the West Indies. Its name is derived from the French word *loup-garou*, which means "werewolf." The *loogaroo* is a person who has been given magical powers in exchange for bringing the devil blood.

At night, the *loogaroo* removes its skin and places it in a silk-cotton tree. Assuming the form of a ball of light, they will then enter homes in search of blood. One can protect their home from a *loogaroo* by scattering grain or sand in the doorway, as the *loogaroo* must count every grain before continuing.

The *loogaroo* is also known as a *legarou*.

Nachtzehrer: The vampire of northern Germany, *Nachtzehrer* translates to "night waster," a rather fitting description. As with many eastern European vampires, the *Nachtzehrer* rises from the dead to attack the living. It can be created when a person commits suicide or dies a sudden and accidental death. It is also believed to be associated with epidemics, and if a number of people all die from the same disease then the first person to have died are usually said to be the cause for the rest of the deaths in the area. If a child is born with a caul (an amniotic membrane found on the head of some infants at birth) – especially a red caul – it is considered a sign that the child is fated to become a vampire. Finally and most unusually, it is required that the name of the recently deceased be removed from all burial clothing or else the corpse will rise as a vampire.

While in the grave, the *Nachtzehrer* will eat its burial clothing and chew upon its limbs. Once it has finished attempting to consume itself, the *Nachtzehrer* will rise from the grave and feast upon the corpses of others. Often the *Nachtzehrer* will gorge itself to the point that it cannot digest all of the blood it has swallowed and can be found laying in a great pool of blood.

To ward off the attack of a *Nachtzehrer*, one can place a lump of earth under the suspected vampire's chin, place a coin or stone in the mouth, or tie a handkerchief around the neck. To be absolutely sure that a corpse will not rise as a *Nachtzehrer*, one should cut off its head and drive a stake through the mouth in order to pin it in place.

In Austria and Bavaria, the *Nachtzehrer* is called the *Bluatsauger* or "bloodsucker."

Namorodo, The: The *Namorodo* is a tribe of vampiric entities in the folklore of northern Native Australians. They are described as skeletons held together only by the ligaments. Resting during the day, at night they go out and enter into the homes of sleeping humans. Once inside, they drain their victim's blood, turning them into *Namorodo* themselves.

Obayifo: This African vampire has many names and appears in the legends of a number of tribes in West Africa. It is not an undead creature, but in fact a witch. Living hidden in the village, at night the witch will transform itself into a glowing ball of light and travel about. It will then suck the blood of people, preferring children, and can also drain the juices from fruits and vegetables. Detecting the lair of an *obayifo* is very difficult as there are no physical clues to tell the witch apart from any other member of the village. Since anyone can learn to be a witch, anyone can be the *obayifo*. Once located, the *obayifo* can be executed in a variety of ways, including being impaled on a stake or being decapitated and having the body burned.

Obur: This vampire is known to the Gagauz people of Bulgaria. Its name may derive from a Turkish world for glutton as the *obur* is said to be a prodigious drinker of blood. Thus, one can trap an *obur* by baiting it with offers of sumptuous foods. It is said that an *obur* can create loud noises and move objects about without touching them.

NOSFERATU

The word "nosferatu," commonly accepted as a name for a vampire, is a modern adaptation of the Slavic word *nosufur-atu*. This word, in turn, is an adaptation of the Greek word *nosophoros*, meaning, "plague carrier." It was first used to refer to a vampire in 1885, and came into general usage with the release of the 1922 silent movie of the same name.

Opyri: *Opyri* is the Bulgarian term for a vampire. It can also be spelled as *vapir*, *vepir*, *vipir* or even *vampir*. The *opyri* is virtually identical to the Traditional Vampire (see) with only a few differences in regards to origin and habits.

An *opyri* can be created by improper preparation of a corpse before burial. The body needs to be cleaned and washed, and care must be taken to prevent shadows from falling on the body or allowing a dog or cat to leap over the body. If any of these steps are not taken, the deceased can rise as a vampire. In addition, persons who suffered violent deaths, the excommunicated, drunkards, murderers, thieves, and witches can all rise as an *opyri* after burial.

The *opyri* is virtually indistinguishable from a normal human being. Bulgarian folklore states that some vampires were able to move to distant towns, marry, produce children and eat a normal diet – all as if they had never died in the first place. The only difference from their previous lives is that every night the *opyri* will go out in search of blood.

An *opyri* is usually disposed off with a stake, although a method unique to Bulgaria is possible – capturing the vampire in a bottle. In order to dispose of an *opyri* in this manner, one needs to locate a *djadadjii*, or vampire hunter. The *djadadjii*, armed with an icon of Jesus, Mary, or a Christian saint, will find the vampire and drive it into a bottle stuffed with food. Once the vampire is inside, the bottle is sealed and tossed into a fire.

Penanggalan: This Malaysian vampire is possibly the most horrific entity found in this list. During the day, the *penanggalan* appears as a normal human woman, but at night, the woman's head will separate from her body, pulling her stomach and other entrails free, to dangle below the head. Once free, the head flies off to drink the blood of children and mothers giving birth. After sating itself, the head will soak its entrails in vinegar to reduce the swelling from all the blood it has consumed before rejoining with the body. To protect oneself from the attack of the *penanggalan*, the branches of the *jeruju* tree should be hung about the roof. The thorns of the *jeruju* will catch the intestine of the *penanggalan* and hold the head till dawn, at which point it can be destroyed.

Pihuechenyi: An enormous winged snake, the *pihuechenyi* is found in stories the Aracucanian people of Chile. It preys on the blood of those that sleep in the forests.

Pontianak: This Javanese vampire is created when a women dies in childbirth (or as a virgin). Flying about at night, it can be heard wailing and crying. The creatures can assume the shape of a bird or a very beautiful woman. They tend to drink the blood of infants, or seduce men and kill them. The *pontianak* has the unusual physical feature of having a hole in its back, covered by long strands of hair. A man attacked by a *pontianak* needs to pull a single strand free to save himself from the vampire's attack. In Malaysia, the *pontianak* is the stillborn child of a *langsuyar*.

Space Vampire: These invisible, interstellar horrors are found in the pages of H.P. Lovecraft's Cthulhu mythos. Normally, they are invisible, but after consuming a victim's blood, they become discernible as reddish-pink masses of tentacles with small-toothed mouths at the tips. As soon as the space vampire digests its meal of blood, it will turn invisible again.

Strigoi Mort: A *strigoi mort* is the vampire of Romania. It can be created in any number of ways, including being born with a caul, being born out of wedlock, being born with a tail, dying before baptism, and if the *strigoi mort*'s mother did not eat salt while she was pregnant. Those who led evil or immoral lives, liars, suicides, and witches were also candidates for becoming a vampire. Finally, anyone bitten by a vampire would become a vampire themselves.

Once risen as a vampire, the *strigoi mort* would first prey upon relatives and livestock. The home of such a vampire might be the scene of poltergeist attacks, and food supplies would be broken into. Afterwards, the *strigoi mort* would attack other village members, eventually leaving the local area and traveling elsewhere in an attempt to resume a normal life.

The grave of a *strigoi mort* can be detected by a small hole near the grave (used by the vampire to enter and leave the coffin). Inside the coffin, the body will be red-faced and spattered with fresh blood. If the vampire has been raiding food stores, corn meal might be found as well.

Precautions taken against the *strigoi mort* include carefully preparing the recently deceased, placing garlic near the windows and doors of a home, or placing a thorny wild rose branch in the coffin. Occasionally, distaffs are set in the ground above the coffin, with the intent of impaling the vampire as it rises.

Once discovered, staking and decapitation can eliminate the strigoi mort. The stake, made of wood or iron, is driven through the heart or the stomach. Garlic should be placed in the mouth, and seeds (usually millet) are scattered around the body. A modern method to destroy a vampire is to fire a bullet into the vampire's empty coffin.

Strix: Ancient Romans describe the strix as a night-flying bird that drinks the blood of infants. Depending on the time period, the *strix* may in fact be a witch. In either case, it will only come out at night, and feeds almost exclusively on young, unattended children. The *strix* is

called a *stirge* in Greece, a *strigoi* in Romania, and a *strega* in Italy.

Sukuyan: A vampire from the islands of Trinidad and Tobago, the *sukuyan* goes from house to house in the form of a normal human woman asking for matches and salt. If invited inside and give the items she has asked for, the *sukuyan* will then return at night as a ball of light and drink the blood of anyone she finds in the house.

In order to stop a *sukuyan* from visiting, one must chant "Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday" three times while marking a cross over every door and window. A mirror is then hung in all the doors and windows as well. The *sukuyan* will see her reflection in the mirror and the mark of the cross and be forced to flee.

The *sukuyan* is similar in many respects to the *azeman* as both become blood drinkers after casting off their skin, and both can be confounded with brooms placed across doorways.

Tlahuelpuchi: A Mexican witch-vampire, the *tlahuelpuchi* is very similar to the Portuguese *bruxa*. The *tlahuelpuchi* is born a vampire assuming its full powers with the onset of puberty. It can be either male or female, but is most often a woman. Indistinguishable from the normal villagers, the *tlahuelpuchi* lived hidden in a village, feeding on the blood of either humans or cattle anywhere from one to four times a month.

As a witch, the *tlahuelpuchi* could transform itself into various animal forms. Dogs are most common, but the *tlahuelpuchi* can also assume the form of buzzards, cats, and turkeys. When shifting shape into an animal form, the *tlahuelpuchi* will tie its legs together and leave them behind.

Besides assuming the shape of different animals, the *tlahuelpuchi* can also control minds. Usually it will use this power to kill its enemies, buy forcing them to walk off of a tall cliff, or perform some similar action.

Protection from a *tlahuelpuchi* is achieved through the use of garlic. Onions might be used as well, along with bowls of water, Christian holy medals, crosses, mirrors, and pins. A *tlahuelpuchi* can be disposed of through stoning or clubbing. Once dead, the body will have the sense organs removed and then abandoned be in some deserted local.

Upiór: An *upiór* is a vampire from Poland. Also known as an *upier* if male or an *upierzyca* if female, the *upiór* can be identified by having two teeth at birth, a red face, and a very active and extroverted temperament. After death, the *upiór* did not undergo rigor mortis, and remained healthy in appearance. It would rise at midnight and chew its fingers and clothing before leaving the grave to drink the blood of family members.

In order to prevent an *upiór* from rising, one can place a coin (or crucifix) in the mouth or a block under the chin. A fishing net, a bag of sand, or seeds can be placed in the coffin as well. One can also circle the coffin with seeds. If this doesn't work, opening the grave and driving a nail through the vampire's head can dispose of the vampire. Decapitating the vampire and placing the head between its legs will also keep it from rising. Finally, victims of the *upiór's* attacks should be given some of the blood from the vampire to help speed their recovery.

Another version of the *upiór* is the *vjesci*. This vampire is the destiny of any child born with a caul. If this caul is removed, dried, powdered, and fed to the child when he or she turns seven, this fate can be avoided.

Upir: The *upir* is the vampire of the Czech Republic and Slovakia. This vampire is said to have two hearts and two souls and can be detected by its unusual flexibility, two curls in its hair, and a flushed complexion. The *upir* is said to feed on the blood of humans and animals, and can kill a victim with only a glance (i.e. "the evil eye"). The *upir* is also said to be able to move objects about much like a poltergeist. Finally, victims of an attack by an *upir* report feelings of being suffocated, fatigue, and squeezing around the neck. They also will appear very pale.

The *upir* can be destroyed by decapitation or burning – preferably both. Keeping an *upir* from rising in the first place is accomplished using a variety of methods. One can place coins, herbs, or symbols of Christianity in the coffin; circle the coffin with seeds (such as millet or poppy seeds); nail the vampire's hair or clothing to the coffin; or drive a stake (such a hat pin, an iron wedge, or a wooden stake made from hawthorn or oak) into the head or heart.

The *upir* is also known as a *nelapsi*.

Ustrel: This Bulgarian vampire is said to be formed when a child that has been born on a Saturday dies before receiving baptism. Nine days after burial, the *ustrel* will burrow out of its grave and proceeded to attack local livestock, draining the animal's blood. It will then return to its grave before dawn. After 10 days of this, the *ustrel* will no longer return to its grave, but instead will hide amid the herd animals.

Elimination of an *ustrel* from a herd requires that the herd be driven between two bonfires located at a crossroads. The *ustrel* will be forced away from the animal it uses as a lair and will be trapped at the crossroads. The *ustrel* will then be consumed by wolves.

Vis: This Melanesian vampire is described as a monstrous flying creature with long talons. It drinks the blood of its victims and uses its talons to tear out their eyes.

Vrykolakas: This creature, found in Greek myths, is more of a revenant (a being that returns

BUMPY THINGS

For more information about poltergeists, see the author's *Digital Hero* article *Things That Go Bump in the Night*. In addition, the reader should refer to the "Old Hag" entry for more information on the attack of the *upir*.

from the grave) than a true vampire. The *vrykolakas* can be created in many ways: a curse placed in the deceased (usually by a parent); committing evil acts, such as incest or the murder of one's kin or; a violent death; an improper burial; and excommunication by the church.

Initially the *vrykolakas* was not a violent being. Usually it rose in order to complete some form of unfinished business. Some rose from the dead and resumed living with their families, while others would travel to places where they were not known and remarry. Eventually, an influx of Slavic vampire myths turned the often-benevolent *vrykolakas* into a more traditional (and violent) vampire. Regardless of the *vrykolakas'* intentions, disposal of the corpse was almost always by burning.

Yara-ma-yha-who: The *yara-ma-yha-who* is a creature of Native Australian mythology. Described as a little red man only four feet tall, the *yara-ma-yha-who* has no teeth, a very large mouth, and fingers and toes that are shaped like suckers. Living in the tops of fig trees, the *yara-ma-yha-who* will drop down on a target and drain a great quantity of blood. The *yara-ma-yha-who* will then leave, only to return later and swallow the helpless victim whole. After sleeping off its meal, the *yara-ma-yha-who* then vomits up anything it hasn't digested, which usually includes the person it had swallowed in the first place – who is often still alive. A person can be swallowed several times in this manner: each time they will become shorter and smoother skinned until they finally become a *yara-ma-yha-who* themselves.

The *yara-ma-yha-who* myth is usually told to children as a way to keep them from wandering away. It was also used as a sort of bogeyman, and children who have been bad are told a *yara-ma-yha-who* might come and swallow them.

Write-Ups of Assorted Vampires

> *Arucard:* "A great night… the kind of night that makes me want to drink blood."
>
> *Hellsing*

Traditional Vampire

Ecology: Traditional vampires are creatures of the night. Rising from their graves (or other hiding places), they prey upon the living, drinking their blood. Traditional vampires normally attack former family members, although they may feast upon other people in the local village or domesticated animals (such as cattle or sheep).

The traditional vampire can be created in many ways. A violent death, such as an accident or suicide, was a common origin of this sort of vampire. Allowing an animal (such as a cat or dog) to leap over the recently deceased before burial could cause the corpse to return as a vampire. A vampire might be created because the family failed to perform the proper funeral rites. Immoral behavior might lead to one becoming a vampire. Suicides, heretics (those who had been excommunicated from the Catholic church), persons guilty of a committing evil acts, and witches all might rise as vampires after their death.

It was also possible for a vampire to pass on its state to others. This was usually accomplished by biting. The number of bites varied, and the process required the victim to die before he would rise as a new vampire.

In order to protect themselves from vampire attacks, people relied upon a number of protective devices. Garlic was the most common, and served to deter not only vampires but also many other supernatural creatures. Branches of hawthorn, mountain ash, rowan, and wild rose could also be used to create a barrier to a vampire. Seeds were commonly used to prevent a vampire from entering a dwelling. They were scattered about the grave, the coffin, or a home the vampire might want to enter, and served to keep the vampire away because it was compelled to count them. Since it was widely believed that the vampire could only count one seed per year, such a scattering could keep a vampire away indefinitely.

Other methods of deterring the traditional vampire include turning one's shoes around, placing a mirror by the front door, or placing a broom behind the door. Iron was another common protective device. Placed under or near the bed, it kept vampires away because it was a substance vampires had to avoid. Silver was also used, but to a lesser extent. Because the vampire was affected by physical weapons, some people kept knives, needles, and scissors near their beds, to be used in case of vampire attack.

Once discovered as a vampire, the walking corpse could be disposed of in several ways. The simplest was to have a priest repeat the services for the dead, which would dispel the evil spirit and return it on its journey to the underworld. Usually however, more drastic measures were taken. The vampire's clothing might be nailed to the sides of the coffin. Staking was also common. The stake might be made from any of a variety of materials (from iron to wood), and was usually driven through the torso and not just the heart. Sometimes the body was turned face down before being staked, on the belief the vampire would only dig itself deeper in its attempts to rise.

Decapitation was another method of dealing with vampires. Often, the body was staked and decapitated; in some places the head was removed or placed elsewhere in the coffin. Finally, if all else failed, the body would be burned. Fire was considered the ultimate method of dealing with a suspected vampire.

Personality/Motivation: The traditional vampire preys upon its family and close relatives. It desires the blood (or life energy) of the living, and will try to get it from any available source. If denied family members (a vampire's favored prey), the vampire will seek out other people in the area, or even slake its thirst on local herd animals. Some vampires try to hide their existence, and will move away from the place of their creation, living relatively normal lives elsewhere.

Powers/Tactics: The traditional vampire is by no means a powerful monster in combat. It can be harmed by normal weapons and doesn't seem to be especially resistant to guns. Thus, a traditional vampire doesn't attempt to assault its victims with brute force, but through stealth and cunning. Coming out at night (when everyone else should be asleep), the vampire moves quickly and quietly to the home of its desired target. Gaining entry via its ability to transform into a cloud of mist, the vampire will then attempt to drain blood from a selected victim. If discovered, the vampire will flee, returning to its grave as quickly as possible to avoid detection and discovery.

The various powers and abilities attributed to vampires are far too numerous to list here. Some are said to be able to levitate (but not fly), while others are believed to be able to transform into an assortment of creatures other than wolves (and in some areas, it is believed vampires can assume the shape of certain plants or tools!).

Campaign Use: As can be seen, the traditional vampire isn't all that powerful. It inspired fear

VAMPIRE LEGENDS

The traditional vampire, as described here, is derived from a mixture of Eastern European legends concerning the nature of vampires. The main source for this write-up came from the Slavic vampire legends, which are very detailed and thus well-suited for creating a vampire for use in a gaming situation.

and horror due to the fact it was a walking corpse, belonging to neither the realm of the living nor the dead. Its ability to strike without being seen, and its habit of preying upon relatives also made it an object of revulsion. In game terms, however, the traditional vampire is very weak. Physically, it isn't very strong and doesn't possess any special defenses. It is, however, very hard to detect, as it doesn't leave any sign of its having visited other then a general feeling of weakness in its victims.

In order to make the traditional vampire a little more fearsome, you might want to consider taking a closer look at the supposed habits of the traditional vampire and extrapolate from there. For example, if the traditional vampire can be harmed by knives and other simple weapons, why stake the body? Can the vampire regenerate its wounds while it sleeps during the day? There is also the fact vampire attacks never seem to be witnessed. No one sees or hears the vampire while it is feeding. The character sheet allows the vampire to be soundless; can it also become invisible as well?

Dealing with these questions allows you to further customize the vampire to suit your own needs. In traditional folklore, the vampire was a creature to be feared, mainly because of its hidden nature. By fully developing the basic vampire template given here, you can create an authentic object of horror most players will know only too well how to defeat, until they discover that not everything one reads in books is true.

Appearance: The traditional vampire is usually described as a corpse that is still dressed in its funeral clothing and is stinking of death. The body is bloated with skin that is stretched tight. The fingernails have usually grown long, while the fingers themselves (and the other appendages) may have been eaten away. Other vampires may look perfectly human, having no physical characteristics to give away their true nature. Certain animals – specifically cats, dog, and horses – will recognize a vampire for what it is regardless of its outward form.

Traditional Vampire

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH [1]
13	DEX	9	12-	OCV: 4 /DCV: 4
15	CON	10	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll: 11-
18	EGO	16	13-	ECV: 6
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
4	COM	-3	10-	
6	PD	4		Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
6	ED	3		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	7		Phases: 4, 8, 12
6	REC	2		
30	END	0		
25	STUN	2		

Total Characteristics Cost: 62

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Leaping: 2"/4"
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
12	*Blood Drain:* Drain BODY 1d6, Delayed Return Rate (5 Points per Week; +1¾), Invisible to Sight and Hearing Groups (+¾), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); Concentration (0 DCV Throughtout, -1), Extra Time (1 Turn, -1¼), Must Follow Grab (-½)	0
27	*Mist Form:* Desolidification (Affected by Fire and Wind Attacks); Cannot Pass Through Solid Objects (-½)	4
15	*Undead Body:* Does Not Bleed	0
44	*Undead Body:* Life Support (All except Diminished Eating and Diminished Sleep, including Immortality)	0
30	*Silent Movement:* Invisibility to Sound Group, No Fringe, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½)	0
5	*Creature of the Night:* Nightvision	0
26	*Wolf Form:* Multiform (132-point Wolf form)	0

Skills

2	AK: Local Area 11-	
3	Climbing 12-	
2	PS: Former Profession 11-	
7	Shadowing 13-	
7	Stealth 14-	
3	Tracking 11-	

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 183

Total Character Cost: 245

75+ Disadvantages

10	Distinctive Features: Recognizable as a Vampire to Cats, Dogs, and Horses (Not Concealable, Causes Fear, Detectable Only by a Small Group)
25	Distinctive Features: Walking Corpse with a Bloated Look and the Stink of Death (Not Concealable, Causes Fear)
10	Hunted: Local Villagers (Less Pow, Limited Geography, Kill) 14-
15	Physical Limitation: Repelled by Garlic, Hawthorn, Mountain Ash, Rowan, and Wild Rose (Infrequently, Fully)
15	Psychological Limitation: Compelled to Count Scattered Seeds (Uncommon, Total)
20	Psychological Limitation: Compelled to Drink Blood (Common, Total)
20	Vulnerability: 2x BODY from Fire-Based Attacks (Common)
55	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 245

OPTIONS

Cost	Traditional Vampire Powers	END
3	*Human Appearance:* +6 COM	0
40	*Undead Body:* 75% Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant; STUN Only (-½)	0
5	*Undead Body:* Damage Resistance (6 PD/6 ED); Not Versus Fire (-½)	0
6	*Undead Body:* Healing 1d6 (Regeneration), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Persistent (+½); Self Only (-½), Extra Time (1 BODY per Hour, -2)	0
4	*Levitation:* Flight 5"; No Noncombat Movement (-¼), Only to Hover or Go Up and Down (-1)	2
17	*Vampiric Contamination:* Major Transform 2d6 (Human into Vampire, Heals Back through a Variety of Rituals), Invisible to Sight and Hearing Groups (+¾), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); Extra Time (roughly 15 Minutes, -2), No Range (-½), Limited Target (Humans, -½)	

American Cinematic Vampire

Ecology: The cinematic vampire lives to feast upon the rest of humanity. Usually the vampire feels that the bulk of normal humans constitute its prey, and many vampires use such terms as "cattle" or "the herd" when referring to day-dwelling humans. In general, a vampire needs to feed at least once a week. The actual time period varies, and can be anywhere from nightly to monthly (and usually follows the cycles of the moon). When feeding, the vampire often doesn't have to take sufficient blood to kill its victim, just enough to slake the vampire's thirst. In some cases, the victim submits to the vampire willingly. If the vampire is unable to find a human host, it will prey upon animals, drinking the blood of cattle or domesticated pets. A few vampires – usually ones with an aversion to taking a life – get their blood from blood banks or by eating raw meat.

If a vampire kills a human, the person will often rise as a vampire the next night. The exact method of creating a new vampire varies according to the source material, but usually requires the vampire to drain all of the blood from its victim. Sometimes the victim is required to drink some of the vampire's blood as well. In a few cases the transformation from human to vampire requires a certain number of bites. Note that the vampire biting its target must kill the victim; death by other means (for example if the vampire uses its great strength to break a victim's neck) does not result in the target of the vampire's attack rising as a vampire.

Because of their undead, evil state, vampires are repelled by holy objects. This usually includes crosses, crucifixes, holy water, holy wafers, the Bible, and other religious items. Some modern interpretations state it is not the object that holds the vampire at bay, but the wielder's belief. Thus, a Star of David or other non-Christian religious objects or icons can repel a vampire. It should also be noted this modern ideology can go beyond religious objects as well: a modern vampire film includes a character who believes so deeply in the power of money that he is able to repel a vampire with his wallet! Conversely, religious objects wielded by a non-believer are useless against a vampire and grant no protection.

As with the traditional vampire, garlic is an effective means of keeping a vampire at bay. Most of the older, more traditional methods no longer seem to be of any use. About the only things the modern vampire fears is sunlight and fire, both of which are quite effective in destroying them.

Personality/Motivation: In general, the modern cinematic vampire is motivated by simple survival. Because of their great physical strength and relative invulnerability, many of the younger cinematic vampires tend to live in an almost reckless manner, deeply entrenching themselves in the local night life, attending parties, concerts, and other night-time social functions. Older cinematic vampires usually are more reclusive, concerned more with prolonging their un-life, as opposed to "living it up."

As with the traditional vampire, the powers of a cinematic vampire vary greatly. In many cases it is believed a vampire has a telepathic link to any vampire it has created. Other vampires are able to cling to walls and other surfaces much like a fly, and use this ability to climb into a victim's bedroom or other dwelling. It is also believed a vampire cannot cross running water under its own power, must sleep in a coffin, and must sleep in or on earth from its place of origin.

Powers/Tactics: Because of their great physical strength and virtual immunity to harm, cinematic vampires tend to be far less cautious then their traditional brethren. They are more than willing to forcibly take what they want, using their hypnotic powers to gain entry to a dwelling and force a victim to submit to their will. If confronted by opponents, the vampire may try to overpower them physically, attempting to escape only if outnumbered or the sun is rising.

Campaign Use: The cinematic vampire is a powerful foe. Many of its powers can be traced directly to Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, which first established many of the powers and abilities common attributed to the "classic" vampire. The films of Universal Pictures in the 1930s further defined the look of the vampire, mostly through the performance and mannerisms of Bela Lugosi. The Hammer films of the 50's added such touches as fangs and red eyes. Interestingly enough, it seems that the vampire's inability to tolerate the sun can be traced directly to the 1922 film *Nosferatu*. It is in this film that the rising sun destroys the vampire, Count Orlock. Many modern books, however, have dispensed with many of the traditional weaknesses of the vampire, making them very powerful and nearly indestructible.

Armed with this knowledge, a Hero System Game Master has a great deal of leeway when working with the cinematic vampire. In general, the cinematic vampire should look much like the template presented here, which represents the "classic" vampire powers as commonly perceived today. A Game Master should feel free to add or remove a few minor powers, or adjust the disadvantages to reflect the status of a vampire in his campaign. It should be noted that

a common treatment of modern vampires is that they gain most of their power only after sundown. Thus, many of a vampire's powers and characteristics could be bought "Only in Hero Form" with the "hero form" occurring only at night.

It should also be pointed out that the write-up presented here is lacking in many characteristics (such as Intelligence) and certainly doesn't have the skills one would expect of a centuries-old vampire. A fully fleshed-out vampire, complete with all the knowledge and resources of several centuries of life, can, and should, be a terrifying foe. Armed with all of its supernatural power, as well as possible less-powerful vampire followers and even mortal human servants, a true cinematic vampire can be more than a match for even superheroes.

Appearance: Unlike its traditional cousin – who is usually described as a walking corpse – the cinematic vampire is quite human in appearance. In fact, the cinematic vampire is often very attractive, sophisticated, well dressed and well mannered, presenting an aristocratic air. Naturally, not all such vampires take after European nobility, and there are plenty of cinematic vampires who dress in all-black clothing, or in ragged jeans and t-shirts. In general, however, the only thing setting a cinematic vampire apart from the rest of humanity is its fangs, reddish eyes, pale complexion, and cold skin. These attributes can be concealed in a variety of ways, such as make-up, dark glasses, and the simple procedure of the vampire keeping its mouth closed. A vampire's most distinguishing characteristic, its inability to cast a reflection, is much harder for a vampire to conceal. A lack of mirrors in a residence is often taken as a clue that the person who lives there might be a vampire.
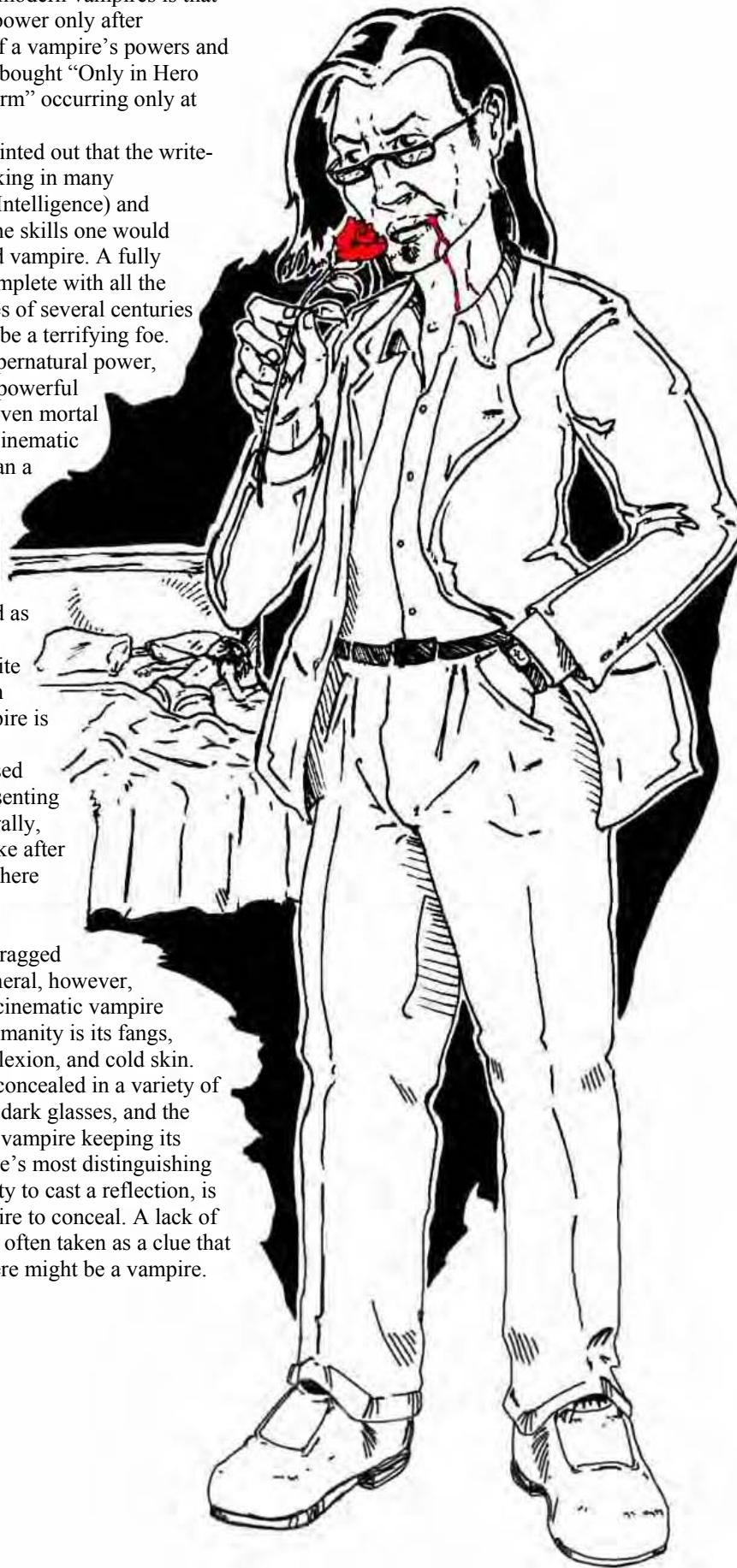
OPTIONS

Cost	Powers	END
3	*Inhuman Beauty:* +6 COM (or more)	0
2	*Irresistible Charm:* +10 COM; Only to Members of the Opposite Sex (-1)	0
4	*Irresistible Charm:* +10 PRE; Only for Members of the Opposite Sex (-1), Only to Seduce (-½)	0
10	*Cling To Walls:* Clinging (Normal STR)	0
16	*Flying:* Flight 8"	2
10	*Mental Link:* Mind Link to Vampires Created by Self, No Line Of Sight Needed	0

American Cinematic Vampire

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
25	STR	15	14-	Lift 800 kg; 5d6 HTH [2]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
20	CON	20	13-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll: 11-
18	EGO	16	13-	ECV: 6
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
14	COM	2	12-	
10	PD	5		Total PD: 10 (10 rPD)
10	ED	6		Total ED: 10 (10 rED)
4	SPD	12		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
10	REC	2		
40	END	0		
33	STUN	0		

Total Characteristics Cost: 112

Movement:
Running:	6"/12"	
Leaping:	5"/10"	
Swimming:	0"/0"	
Flight:	5"/10"	

Cost	Powers	END
7	*Bite:* HKA 1 pip (½d6 with STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½)	0
33	*Blood Drain:* HKA 1d6, NND (Defense is Not Having Blood or Protective Skin or Equipment Too Thick to Bite Through, +1), Does BODY (+1), Continuous (+1), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); Bite Must Do BODY (-½), STR Does Not Add (-½)	0
60	*Hypnotic Control:* Mind Control 12d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); Eye Contact Required (-½)	0
17	*Vampiric Contamination:* Major Transform 2d6 (Human into Vampire, Heals Back through a Variety of Rituals), Invisible to Sight and Hearing Groups (+¾), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); Extra Time (roughly 15 Minutes, -2), No Range (-½), Limited Target (Humans, -½)	0
40	*Undead Body:* Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 75%; Not versus Wood (-½)	0
40	*Undead Body:* Energy Damage Reduction Resistant, 75%; Not Versus Fire (-½)	0
8	*Undead Body:* Damage Resistance (10 PD/10 ED); Not Versus Fire (-½)	0
27	*Mist Form:* Desolidification (Affected by Fire and Wind Attacks); Cannot Pass through Solid Objects (-½)	4
15	*Undead Body:* Does Not Bleed	0
44	*Undead Body:* Life Support (All except Diminished Eating and Diminished Sleep, including Immortality)	0
4	*Levitation:* Flight 5"; No Noncombat Movement (-¼), Only to Hover or Go Up and Down (-1),	1
-2	*Cannot Cross Water:* Swimming -2" (0" Total)	0
5	*Creature of the Night:* Nightvision	0
32	*Wolf Form:* Multiform (assume 85-point Bat Form or 136-point Wolf Form, True Form is a 472-point Cinematic Vampire)	0

Skills
15	+3 with Hand-to-Hand Combat
2	AK: Local Area 11-
3	High Society 13-
3	Persuasion 13-
2	PS: Former Profession 11-
3	Seduction 13-
3	Shadowing 11-
3	Stealth 13-
3	Tracking 11-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 360

Total Cost: 472

75+ Disadvantages
15	Distinctive Features: Does Not Reflect in Mirrors (Not Concealable, Major Reaction)
5	Distinctive Features: Fangs, Red Eyes, Pale Complexion (Easily Concealable, Major Reaction)
10	Distinctive Features: Physically Cold to the Touch (Concealable, Major Reaction)
10	Hunted: Assorted Vampire Hunters 11- (Less Pow)
15	Physical Limitation: Cannot Cross Running Water (Infrequently, Fully Impairing)
20	Physical Limitation: Repelled by Garlic and Various Holy Symbols (Frequently, Fully Impairing)
15	Psychological Limitation: Arrogant and Overconfident (Common, Strong)
20	Psychological Limitation: Cannot Enter a Residence without an Invitation (Common, Total)
20	Susceptibility: to Direct Sunlight, 1d6 BODY per Segment (Uncommon)
40	Vulnerability: 2x BODY and STUN from Fire (Common)
227	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 472

Dhampir

Ecology: A being found in Gypsy myths, the *dhampir* is the result of a sexual union between a woman and a vampire. Gypsies believe some vampires have sexual appetites rivaling their taste for blood, and these vampires will rise from their graves to visit certain women of their choosing. The result will be a *dhampir*. The *dhampir* is almost always a male and is said to have certain powers enabling them to find and destroy vampires. These powers will then be passed on to the *dhampir's* children, resulting in an entire bloodline of vampire hunters.

The *dhampir* us also known by the names *dhampire, lampijerovic, vampir* (male), *vampijerovic,* and *vampuiera* (female).

Personality/Motivation: Due to their unique heritage, a *dhampir* is a natural vampire killer. Many turn this talent into a occupation, and become professional vampire hunters.

Powers/Tactics: *Dhampirs* have the ability to kill a vampire by striking it with their bare hands. Others are noted for using a firearm, such as a pistol, to accomplish the deed. In most cases, a *dhampir* will track a vampire to its lair, dig it up and kill it. If that does not work, then they will wait in the village, allowing the vampire to come to them. At this point the *dhampir* will grapple with the vampire and kill it.

It is said some rare *dhampirs* can assume the form of a wolf, just like a full vampire. Other people believe a *dhampir* has a slippery, boneless body and will only live for a short life. This belief seems to come from the idea that vampires themselves have no bones.

Campaign Use: The legend of the *dhampir* is quite common in the Balkans, where some people still believe in the existence of vampires. A *dhampir* by the name of Murat was active in and around Kosovo, Serbia during the 1950s, while the last known *dhampir* ceremony occurred in 1959 (although one may have been performed a recently as 1989).

The *dhampir* character sheet is designed to act as a foe for the Traditional Vampire write up (see). As some legends described the traditional vampire as being invisible, the *dhampir's* ability to detect vampires becomes a quite potent skill indeed. For cinematic vampires, the *dhampir* taken "as is" will be totally outmatched. It is recommended for any Game Master wishing to build a cinematic *dhampir* to take the Cinematic Vampire character sheet, and remove all of the powers and disadvantages with being undead (such as the Life Support power and needing to drink blood). Then add in the detection and combat abilities of the traditional *dhampir*. The result should be a strong, tough, and very fast human who can fight a vampire one-on-one, go outside during the day, and not worry about having to kill people in order to survive. Of course, a cinematic *dhampir* is usually hunted by Cinematic Vampires…

Appearance: A *dhampir* looks like a normal human, with no special or distinguishing marks.
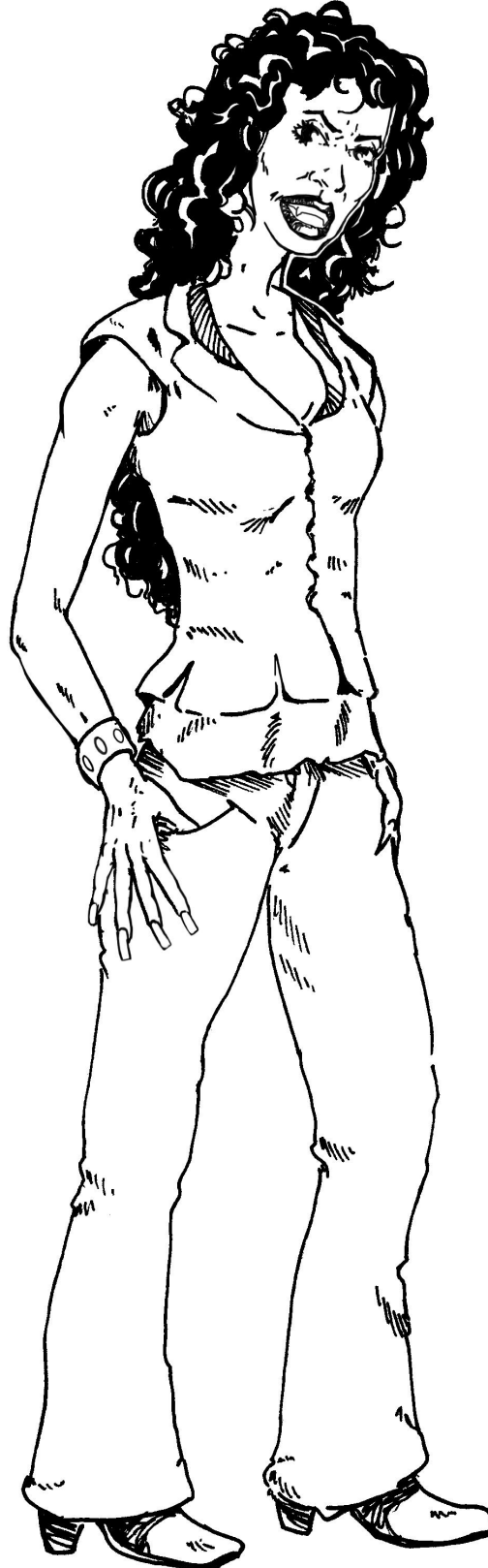
Dhampir

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	150 kg; 2½d6 HTH [1]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
13	CON	6	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll: 12-
15	EGO	10	12-	ECV: 5
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
10	COM	0	11-	
3	PD	0		Total: 3 PD (0 rPD)
3	ED	0		Total: 3 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	7		Phases: 4, 8, 12
6	REC	0		
26	END	0		
24	STUN	0		

Total Characteristics Cost: 44

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Leaping: 2½"/5"
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
20	*Vampire Slaying Skill:* HKA 2d6 (2½d6 with STR); Only Versus Vampires (-½)	3
10	*Vampire Slaying Skill:* RKA +1d6, Adds to Any Firearm; Only Versus Vampires (-½)	[varies]
3	*Vampire Slaying Skill:* PRE +7; Defensive Only (-1), Only Versus Vampires (-½)	0
41	*Supernatural Perception:* Detect Vampires (Smell/Taste Group), Discriminatory, 360°, Range, Sense, Targeting, Telescopic (+6 versus Range Modifier), Tracking	0

Perks

2 Reputation: Vampire Hunter 11- (Local Villagers) +2/+2d6

Talents

25 *Supernatural Perception:* Danger Sense: Sense, Any Danger, General Area; Only Versus Vampires (-½)

Skills

7 *Vampire Slaying Skill:* +2 with Hand-to-Hand Combat, Only Versus Vampires (-½)

2 AK: Local Area 11-
3 KS: Vampires and Vampire Lore 12-
2 PS: Vampire Hunter 11-
3 Shadowing 12-
3 Stealth 12-
3 Tracking 12-
1 WF: Pistol

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 125

Total Character Cost: 169

75+ Disadvantages
10 Hunted: Vampires (AsPow) 8-
5 Rivalry: Professional (with other vampire hunters)
79 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 169

OPTIONS

Cost	Dhampir Powers	END
29	*Wolf Form:* Multiform (145-point Wolf Form)	0

Lamia

Ecology: According to Greek myth, the first Lamia was a Libyan queen and one of Zeus's many lovers. Hera, enraged that Zeus had seduced yet another mortal woman, killed all of Lamia's children. Lamia, mad with grief, vowed to get her revenge upon Hera by going forth and preying on the children of other women. In time, Lamia's actions caused her to transform into a horrific monster.

Solitary creatures, lamia prey upon small children and young men. They venture forth at night, looking for unattended children to devour or for young men whom they can seduce in order to drink their blood. During the day lamia hide in caves, as they cannot tolerate sunlight.
The lamia is also known by the names empusai, lamiae, and lamiai, and are said to be the servants of Hecate, the Greek goddess of sorcery.

Powers/Tactics: The lamia hunts by stealth and guile. Children are taken quietly in the night, to be devoured at the lamia's leisure. Young men are seduced with the promise of sexual pleasures and then devoured after a night of passion. In general, lamia avoid open combat, but are quite capable of defending themselves if need be. Naturally, they prefer to strike their prey unawares, and will usually flee if attacked themselves. If pressed in hand-to-hand combat, a lamia will try to use her unnatural strength to restrain her target and then rend him with either her claws or fangs.

Personality/Motivation: First and foremost, the lamia desires revenge: revenge against Hera for killing Lamia's children and revenge against all the mothers of the world for having that which Lamia was denied. To this end they seek out and devour infants. Other lamia are far less discriminating and are driven by a simple bloodlust. These lamia desire the blood of the young and beautiful, for this blood is the purest and strongest. A lamia driven by this bloodlust usually hunts handsome young men, but some are known to prey on both sexes equally.

Campaign Use: The lamia is a fine example of an early vampiric entity. Originally a unique creature, eventually the lamia represented a whole class of beings. Used to explain sudden deaths among infants, the lamia became a way for parents to frighten unruly children. Even today, people will say that a child who has died unexpectedly has been taken by the lamia.

The character sheet presented here combines a number of myths and accounts together. Because of the large number of contradictory reports regarding the appearance and habits of the lamia, you will find you have a lot of leeway when it comes to presenting this creature in a campaign. Aside from the optional powers (some of which further define the lamia's presumed snake-like appearance), a lamia could possess even greater strength, higher and more complete defenses (such as Damage Reduction), increased shape-shifting powers (such as transformation into a dog or a cow), greater regenerative powers, and possibly even spells. In addition, if the lamia is presumed to be a creature that hunts city streets, she might possess such relevant skills as Concealment, Contortionist, Conversation, Disguise, High Society, Lockpicking, Mimicry, Streetwise, and Weapon Familiarities.

Due to its nocturnal habits, reputation for cunning, and shapeshifting abilities, a lamia could prove to be a very potent opponent indeed. Greek stories have a number of instances where a lamia successfully seduced a human lover and fattened him up for the eventual kill. Others took a more direct route, slaying those who dared to spurn their advances with whatever weapons were at hand, and then drinking the victim's blood. Although best suited for the fantasy genre, a properly written up lamia with a full complement of optional abilities and spells could pose a serious threat to even a group of superheroes.

Appearance: Lamia vary greatly as to their appearance. Most often they are described as having the head and upper torso of a woman while the lower body is that of a great snake. Other lamia are described as being women with mismatched feet. One is brass, while the other is that of a donkey, goat, or ox. Some lamia have the lower bodies of a serpent, the forelegs of a cat, and the rear legs of a goat. Regardless of the lamia's true nature, it can transform itself into a beautiful woman in order to seduce young men, who form a major portion of the lamia's prey.

Lamia

Lamia

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
20	STR	10	13-	Lift 400 kg; 4d6 HTH [2]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
18	CON	16	13-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll: 12-
15	EGO	10	12-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
4	COM	-3	10-	
8	PD	4		Total: 11 PD (3 rPD)
8	ED	4		Total: 11 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	12		Phases: 4, 8, 12
8	REC	0		
36	END	0		
35	STUN	1		

Total Characteristics Cost: 101

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Leaping: 0"/0"
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
7	*Bite:* HKA 1 pip (½d6 with STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½)	0
33	*Blood Drain:* HKA 1d6, NND (Defense is Not Having Blood or Protective Skin or Equipment Too Thick to Bite Through, +1), Does BODY (+1), Continuous (+1), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); Bite Must Do BODY (-½), STR Does Not Add (-½)	0
12	*Claws:* HKA 1d6 (2d6 with STR); Reduced Penetration (-¼)	1
4	*Scaled Body:* Armor (3 PD/3 ED); Activation Roll 11- (Locations 13-18, -1), Only While in Snake-Bodied Form (-½)	0
44	*Inhuman Body:* Life Support (All except Diminished Eating and Diminished Sleep, including Immortality)	0
5	*Creature of the Night:* Nightvision	0
25	*Assume Human Form:* Shape Shift (Sight, Hearing, and Touch Groups, to Normal Human Female Form), Costs END Only to Change Shape (+¼) **plus** +16 COM; Linked (-½)	

	Skills	
10	+2 with Hand-to-Hand Combat	
4	+2 OCV with Grab	
3	+1 with Acting, Persuasion, and Seduction	
3	Acting 13-	
2	AK: Local Area 11-	
3	Climbing 13-	
3	Persuasion 13-	
5	Seduction 14-	
5	Shadowing 13-	
3	Stealth 13-	

3	Tracking 12-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 179

Total Character Cost: 280

	75+ Disadvantages
15	Physical Limitation: Cannot Stand the Light of Day (Infrequently, Fully)
5	Physical Limitation: Reduced Leap, Cannot Leap (Infrequently, Slightly)
15	Psychological Limitation: Hatred Of children and Mothers (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Vengeful (Common, Strong)
15	Reputation: Slayer of Children, Devourer of Young Men, 11- (Extreme)
20	Susceptibility: to Direct Sunlight, 1d6 BODY per Segment (Uncommon)
120	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 280

OPTIONS

Cost	Lamia Powers	END
7	*Snake's Tail:* +10 STR, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); Only With Grab and Squeeze (-1)	0
5	*Snake's Tail:* Stretching 1", Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); No Noncombat Stretching (-¼), No Velocity Damage (-¼)	0
70	*Hypnotic Control:* Mind Control 12d6, Telepathic (+¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); Eye Contact Required (-½)	0
4	*Swift Movement:* Running +2" (8" Total)	2
6	*Inhuman Body:* Healing 1d6 (Regeneration), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Persistent (+½); Self Only (-½), Extra Time (1 BODY per Hour, -2)	0

Count Dracula

Background/History: The most famous vampire in the world, Count Dracula is centuries-old vampire who dwells in a great castle located in the Carpathian Mountains in Transylvania. He may (or may not) be *the* Vlad Dracula, who gained fame for his cruelty and habit of impaling his many enemies. Regardless of who Bram Stoker meant him to be, Dracula is certainly very old, and speaks to young Jonathan Harker of many events and battles "…as if he had been present at them all." Dracula also speaks with great pride of the history of his race, the Szekelys; how they descended from Attila the Hun, and how an ancestral Dracula "…crossed the Danube and beat the Turk on his own ground…"

It is Dracula's desire, in the novel *Dracula*, to leave Transylvania and travel to London, there to make a home for himself, while feeding on the unsuspecting populace. He is opposed in this endeavor by a number of people, including the young lawyer Jonathan Harker, who had originally traveled to Castle Dracula in order to handle the sale of a London estate to Dracula; Abraham Van Helsing, a scholar and scientist who knows much about the powers of the undead; Dr. John Seward, Quincy P. Morris, and others.

Although Dracula is able to kill Lucy Westenra, turning her into a vampire as well, he is thwarted in his attempts to take Mina Murray and is driven from London. Pursued to his home in Transylvania, Dracula is eventually caught on the open road and slain by having his throat cut and a knife plunged into his heart.

Personality/Motivation: First and foremost, Dracula is a Count, a member of the ruling class. He tells Harker "Here I am noble; I am *boyar*; the common people know me, and I am master….I have been so long master that I would be master still – or at least none other should be master of me." Thus, Dracula shows both his arrogance and self-centeredness. He is unconcerned with the needs and desires of others, and only thinks of how events will affect him. His aristocratic background leads him to take what he wants, by force if needed, dismissing those who oppose him as unworthy and beneath him.

Dracula's great age and his supernatural powers also allow him a great deal of confidence. He knows time is on his side and that he will outlast any mortal hunter. His powers are such that mere humans do not intimidate him, and Dracula will not run from an encounter unless opposed by the only objects he does fear: garlic, the crucifix, the cross, and other blessed items. The objects will not drive him away, but will cause Dracula to draw back and avoid them.

Another aspect of Dracula's arrogance is his willingness to kill without a second thought. He feeds on the crew of the *Demeter*, kidnaps a baby to feed his three "brides," kills Reinfield in a fit of rage, and threatens to kill Harker in an attempt to make Lucy comply with his demands. In many ways, Dracula is almost like a child, concerned only with his desires. He also arrogantly assumes that what is good for Dracula, is good for everyone else as well, regardless if they think otherwise.

Quotes: "Welcome to my house! Enter freely and of your own will!"

"I pray you, be seated and sup how you please. You will, I trust, excuse me that I do not join you; but I have dined already and do not sup."

"Listen to them – the children of the night. What music they make."

Powers/Tactics: As a vampire, Dracula has a great number of powers at his command. Van Helsing gives a long and extended narration of the powers of a vampire late in the novel; he describes Dracula in this manner: "This vampire which is among us is so strong in person as twenty men; he is cunning more than mortal, for his is the cunning of ages; have still the aids of necromancy, which is, as his etymology imply, the divination of the dead, and in the dead that he can come nigh to are for him to command…he can, within limitations appear at will when, and where, and in many forms that are to him; he can, within his range, direct the elements; the storm, the fog, the thunder; he can command the mean things: the rat, and the owl, and the bat – the moth, and the fox, and the wolf; he can grow and become small; and at times vanish and come unknown."

This is only a small measure of Dracula's power, for Van Helsing continues: "The vampire live on, and cannot die by mere passing of time; he can flourish when he can fatten on the blood of the living….He as the strength of many in his hand….He can transform himself to wolf…he can be as bat…He can come in mist which he create…the distance he can create this mist is limited and it can only be around himself….He can come on moonlight rays as elemental dust…He can become small…slipt through a hairbreadth space at the tomb door….He can, when once he find his way, come out of or into anything, no matter how close it be bound or even fused up with fire – solder you call it. He can see in the dark…"

Dracula's other powers include the ability to climb vertical surfaces – such as a castle wall, the ability to put his mark on his victims (*i.e.* Mind Link), the power to influence others with

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his gaze (*i.e.* Mind Control), and the ability to transform others into a vampire with powers similar to his own.

Along with all of his power, Dracula has a number of limitations. His great strength diminishes during the day, and most of his supernatural powers are useless when the sun is up. He cannot enter a person's home unless invited first. He doesn't cast a shadow or a reflection, and garlic, the cross, a crucifix and other holy symbols will serve to drive him away. He cannot cross running water under his own power (unless at the slack or flood of the tide), he must rest on (or in) his native soil, a branch of wild rose placed on his coffin (with him in it) will keep him in the coffin, a "sacred bullet" fired into his coffin will "… kill him so he be the true dead…," and finally, a stake through the heart or decapitation will slay Dracula for good.

Since Dracula's powers are greater at night, he prefers to do his work during the hours of darkness. He tends to prey on those who are alone, using his hypnotic control to gain invitation into a residence, or striking at those who are alone outside. He will also force his way into a home in his wolf form, leaping through a window before resuming his normal form to attack an intended victim.

Once Dracula has gained entry to a home, he will visit almost nightly, draining his victim and eventually turning them into a vampire. In order to create another vampire, Dracula must share his blood with his intended victim. This process takes quite some time, and the victim cannot be force-fed the blood, but must cooperate with the ritual. Of crouse, Dracula is not above a knife to the throat or threats to a loved one to gain this cooperation. A newly created vampire will not have all the powers of Dracula, although they will certainly be stronger than normal and can assume an immaterial form

If interrupted or pursued, Dracula has a number of escape methods. His simplest is to physically overpower his foes, using his great strength to overcome a small number of assailants. He can also escape by assuming the form of a cloud of dust or mist, turning into a bat or wolf, or summoning a mist to blind his enemies. As the Count feels he has time on his side, he will often flee an encounter quickly, knowing he can always return later. On the other hand, if cornered or trapped, Dracula will not hesitate to strike out at his attackers.

Campaign Use: Dracula is a character that any player should recognize instantly. The character has appeared in more than 100 films as Dracula, and in countless others in all but name. Many novels have been written starring the Count, some of which take up where the original novel left off, others presuming a different history

entirely. Dracula has even appeared in a number of comic books as both hero and villain, going so far as to combat certain superheroes on equal footing.

What makes this version of Dracula special is it is likely many players won't recognize with whom they are dealing just from witnessing his powers. To most people, Dracula is a suave and sophisticated man in a cape and tuxedo, not a tall, thin man with white hair and rancid breath. The true Count Dracula isn't sensuous or handsome either, he takes what he wants by force, not by seduction.

As written, Count Dracula is certainly more than a match for most heroic-level characters. He might even be able to deal with many low-level superheroes. His low defenses as well as his lack of resistant defenses may make him too weak defensively to be threatening to more powerful superheroic-level characters. For the average, heroic-level fantasy or pulp-era campaign, however, Dracula is perfectly fine as is. If you wish to use Dracula in a Dark Champions or Champions setting, Dracula certainly should have his defenses increased, with one of the best options being to give him both Physical and Energy Damage Reduction. See the Cinematic Vampire for more information.

The author would like to thank Bryant Berggren for his assistance and initial work in writing up Count Dracula.

Appearance: When Jonathan Harker first encounters Count Dracula, he describes him as thus: "Within, stood a tall old man, clean shaven save for a long white moustache, and clad in black head to foot, without a single speck of colour about him anywhere." Harker also remarks on the Count's handshake, saying it was "…as cold as ice…" and likening it to "…the hand of a dead man…".

Later, after dinner, while sitting by the fire, Harker offers a more complete description of Dracula: "His face was strong – very strong – aquiline, with a high bridge of the thin nose and peculiarly arched nostrils; with lofty domed forehead, and hair growing scantily round the temples but profusely elsewhere. His eyebrows were very massive, almost meeting over the nose, and with bushy hair that seemed to curl in its own profusion. The mouth, so far as I could see it under the heavy moustache, was fixed and rather cruel-looking, with peculiarly sharp teeth; these protruded over the lips, whose remarkable ruddiness showed astonishing vitality in a man of his years. For the rest, his ears were pale and the tops extremely pointed; the chin was broad and strong, and the cheeks firm though thin."

Harker goes on to say the Count's hands are broad and coarse, with fine hairs in the center of the palms and long nails cut to a sharp point.

Dracula's eyes are blue, but flare red when he is angry. His breath is "rank" and Harker shudders at the Count's touch.

Eventually, Harker finds Dracula resting in a coffin in a chamber under Castle Dracula. At this point, Harker notices the Count seems to be "…either dead or asleep …for the eyes were open and stony, but without the glassiness of death – and the cheeks had the warmth of life…and the lips were red as ever. But there was no sign of movement, no pulse, no beating of the heart."

Dracula also appears younger at this point, and seems to have recently fed: "There lay the Count, but looking as if his youth had been half renewed, for the white hair and mustache were changed to dark iron-grey; the cheeks were fuller. and the white skin seemed ruby-red underneath; the mouth was redder than ever. For on the lips were gouts of fresh blood…Even the deep, burning eyes seemed set amongst swollen flesh, for the lids and pouches underneath were bloated. It seemed as if the whole awful creature were gorged with blood."

As the story progresses, Dracula, feeding upon the crew of the Demeter and Lucy Westenra, becomes even younger, until his hair and mustache are thick, rich black. Denied blood, it would only seem to reason that Dracula's hair would once again fade, returning to its stark white color.

Count Dracula

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
18/33	STR	15	13-/16-	Lift 300/2400 kg; 3½d6/6½d6 HTH [3]
21	DEX	33	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
25	CON	30	14-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
20	INT	10	13-	PER Roll 13-
23	EGO	26	14-	ECV: 8
30	PRE	20	15-	PRE Attack: 6d6
10	COM	0	11-	
12	PD	8		Total: 12 PD (0 rPD)
10	ED	5		Total: 10 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	9		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
12	REC	6		Values after the Slash are Only
50	END	0		at Night (-¼) and No Figured
40	STUN	3		Characteristics (-½)

Total Characteristics Cost: 175

Movement:
Running:	6"/12"	
Leaping:	3"/6"	
Swimming:	2"/4"	
Teleport:	12"/48"	

Cost	Powers	END
7	*Bite:* HKA 1 pip (½d6 with STR), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½)	0
33	*Blood Drain:* HKA 1d6, NND (Defense is Not Having Blood or Protective Skin or Equipment Too Thick to Bite Through, +1), Does BODY (+1), Continuous (+1), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); Bite Must Do BODY (-½), STR Does Not Add (-½)	0
40	*Summon Mist:* Darkness to Sight Group 6" Radius; No Range (-½), Only at Night (-¼)	7
60	*Command of the Meaner Things:* Mind Control 8d6, Telepathic (+¼), Area Of Effect (4" Radius, +1); Only Affects "Meaner" Animals (Bat, Fox, Moth, Owl, Rat, Wolf) (-¼), Only at Night (-¼)	9
60	*Hypnotic Control:* Mind Control 12d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); Eye Contact Required (-½)	0
13	*Vampiric Contamination:* Major Transform 2d6 (Human to Vampire, Can be Healed Back through Blood Transfusions), Invisible to Sight and Hearing Groups (+¾), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½); Extra Time (roughly 15 Minutes, -2), Limited Target (Humans, -½), No Range (-½), Must Drain All but 1 BODY of Victim's Blood with Blood Drain then Have Him Drink ½d6 BODY of Vampire's Blood (-1)	0
8	*Vampiric Regeneration:* Healing 2d6 (Regeneration), Reduced Endurance (0 END, +½), Persistent (+½); Self Only	

Cost	Powers	END
	(-½), Extra Time (2 BODY per Hour, -2), Only While Sleeping in Coffin (-1), Only at Night (-¼)	0
44	*Undead Body:* Life Support (All except Diminished Eating and Diminished Sleep, including Immortality)	0
10	*Wall Crawling:* Clinging (normal STR)	0
-2	*Cannot Cross Water:* Swimming: -2"	
35	*Come Out or into Anything:* Teleportation 12", 4x Noncombat, 10 Floating Locations; Only at Night (-¼), Teleport Can Only be Used to Get into or Out of "Sealed" Areas but Cannot be Used as Combat Movement (-1)	2
15	*Mental Link:* Mind Link (Specific Group: those Dracula has put his mark upon [shared blood with]), Psychic Bond	0
26	*Summon Weather:* Change Environment 16" Radius, -2 to Sight Group PER Rolls, Varying Effect (Stormy Weather, +½); No Range (-½), Only at Night (-¼)	5
11	*Necromancy:* Precognitive and Retrocognitive Clairsentience (Sight and Hearing Groups); OAF Bulky (Human Corpse, -1½), No Range (-½), Only at Night (-¼), Requires Extended Ritual (-2), Precogniton/Retrocognition Only (-1)	7
28	*Immaterial Form:* Desolidification (Affected by Fire and Wind), Variable Special Effects (Elemental Dust, Mist, Shadows, +¼); Cannot Pass through Solid Objects (-½), Only at Night (-¼)	5
5	*Creature Of The Night:* Nightvision	0
22	*Shapeshifting:* Multiform (assume 105-point Bat Form or 168-point Wolf Form; True Form is 748-point Vampire); Only at His Residence or at Specific Times (-¾)	0

Perks

Cost	
40	Followers: The Three Brides of Dracula (150-point base Vampires)
30	Followers: Band of 32 Loyal Gypsies (0-point base Normals)
5	Fringe Benefit: Member of the Aristocracy
10	Money: Wealthy

Talents

3	Light Sleep

Skills
10   +2 with Hand-to-Hand Combat

3   AK: Transylvania 13-
2   Animal Handler (Canines) 15-
3   Conversation 15-
3   Disguise 13-
3   High Society 15-
3   KS: History of the Szekelys 13-
3   KS: Transylvanian History 13-
3   Persuasion 15-
3   Riding 13-
1   Seduction 8-
3   Shadowing 13-
3   Stealth 13-
3   Tactics 13-
3   Tracking 13-
2   TF: Carts & Carriages, Equines
2   WF: Common Melee Weapons
3   Linguist
2   1) Language: English (Fluent)
2   2) Language: French (Fluent)
2   3) Language: German (Fluent)
1   4) Language: Greek (Conversation)
2   5) Language: Hungarian (Fluent)
1   6) Language: Latin (Conversation)
0   7) Language: Rumanian (Native)
2   8) Language: Turkish (Fluent)

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 573

Total Cost: 748

300+   Disadvantages
10   Distinctive Features: Cold Skin, Sharply
     Pointed Teeth and Fingernails, Red Eyes
     when Angry, Hair on the Palms of the
     Hands, Rank Breath, Pale Skin
     (Concealable)
15   Distinctive Features: Does Not Cast a
     Reflection or a Shadow (Concealable,
     Major Reaction)
15   Hunted: Jonathan Harker, Abraham Van
     Helsing, and Others 14- (Less Pow, Kill)
10   Physical Limitation: Can Only Cross
     Running Water at the Slack or the Flood
     of the Tide (Infrequently, Fully)
10   Physical Limitation: Must Sleep on/in
     Native Soil (Frequently, Slightly)
15   Physical Limitation: Rendered Immobile
     if a Branch of Wild Rose is Placed on His
     Coffin (Infrequently, Fully)
15   Psychological Limitation: Amoral and
     Self-Centered (Common, Strong)
10   Psychological Limitation: Arrogant and
     Overconfident (Common Strong)
20   Psychological Limitation: Cannot Enter a
     Residence without an Invitation
     (Common, Total)
0   Psychological Limitation: Casual Killer
     (Very Common, Strong)
20   Psychological Limitation: Shuns Garlic
     and Crosses/Other Holy Objects
     (Common, Total)
10   Reputation: Dracula, aka Vlad Tepes, aka
     Vlad the Impaler; a Bloodthirsty and
     Cruel Prince of Wallachia and Enemy of
     the Turks, 8- (Extreme)
308   Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 748

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Miniature Hero by William Keyes

Constructing Your Own Terrain

> "Black Harlequin giggles like a schoolgirl. He knows his murderous toys have you on the ropes, so he swoops low over the battlefield on his rocket-powered pogo stick to get a better view."
>
> "I'm going to wipe the grin off that clown's face. Bantamweight picks up one of the giant chess pieces, swings it around his head a few times, and throws it at Harlequin."
>
> "The evil jester shrieks with surprise to see one of his own inventions hurling through the air at him. It hits him square, sending him tumbling off his pogo stick. He hits the ground with a thump. Dr. Lightning, your action."
>
> "It's time someone taught Harlequin a lesson. I'm going to warm up my Shocker Bolt…."
>
> "Ouch. I guess it's true what they say – Crime Doesn't Play."

So you want to stage a great superhero combat, and fill up your battlefield with neat-looking scenery to make it a fight your players will remember, but you don't have a ton of money burning a hole in your pocket. You're just going to have to make do with a rough map sketched on the back of an old character sheet, right?

Wrong. I'm going to show you how to make a battlefield full of great looking terrain for your superhero miniatures for just $25. This article assumes you have tape, glue, crayons or colored pencils, and a few other basic household objects. If you don't, you'll need to pick some up – but all of these items should be readily available for less than $5.

The best thing to do is to start with a specific battle or series of battles in mind. That way you don't waste your time searching for and making terrain you won't be using. Also keep in mind that most superhero combats tend to take place in certain specific locale – inside a warehouse, on the city street surrounded by towering skyscrapers, on the freeway during rush hour, in the middle of City Park, and so forth. Almost all terrain can serve multiple purposes!

So let's start with a specific scenario in mind. We'll keep it simple. Say the Black Harlequin decides to use his toys to rob a bank. The heroes show up in time to stop the bank robbery, and manage to follow one of the toys back to the Harlequin's secret base. Unknown to the heroes, however, the evil clown has set a trap for them….

Part One: Battle at the Bank

For the first part of the game, we need a street scene outside of the bank – a nice little branch office on a tree-lined suburban boulevard. For this, we'll want a couple of buildings, a few cars (including a cop car), and some trees.

First, let's lay the scene. A tablet of newsprint from the local office supply store costs $7 for 50 sheets of 18x24" paper. Two sheets overlapped slightly should give us a very nice battlefield. We'll tape them together with a couple of pieces of transparent tape to keep them from sliding apart. With a crayon or a colored pencil, we can draw in a rough sketch of the scene – how far across the streets are, how wide are the sidewalks, where we're going to place our buildings, and so forth.

Since we're not using a hex map, we'll need something with which to measure distances. A $1 ruler (or if we want to spend a bit more, a $3 tape measure) from the office supply store will do just fine.

Outlay so far: $8.

Now, some cars. We'll visit our local Wal-Mart and pick up some plastic police cars ($3 for a bag with 2 cop cars, one chopper, and a bunch of plastic police) and a couple inexpensive cars and trucks ($2 apiece) to place on the road. We'll be able to use all these vehicles in the future for nearly any superhero battle we ever run. After all, what's a super fight without a few cars to toss around?

Next, we'll visit the local "Everything's a Dollar" store and find some trees. We don't need many – we're not holding the fight in a forest, so just a few will do. I found a package of two trees for a dollar, so I picked up two of them for a total of four trees.

Plastic police cars, die-cast civilian cars, and Christmas trees

Outlay: $9 for two cop cars, two civilian cars, and four trees.

Now comes the tough part: buildings. If we had just won the lottery, there would be plenty of

places to buy some buildings. But since we're working on the cheap, here's what we'll do. We'll start with a couple of small cardboard boxes. You can buy gift boxes at Wal-Mart or the Hallmark store, or you can just ask one of the stockers at any department store to save a handful of cardboard packing boxes for you (and the best part of doing it this way: it's free!).

A cardboard box is certainly usable as is. It'll show your players exactly where the building is, how tall it is, and so forth. But it isn't going to look very good on your table – though that's easy to fix. If you have access to a computer with a drawing program (or even a decent word processor) and a printer, you can create a fine looking building in just minutes.

First measure your boxes. Your measurements don't need to be precise – in fact, it's best if you add an inch or so; it's easy to trim away any extra once you've got your templates finished.

Now, open your drawing program. Make a square with roughly the same dimensions as one side of your box. Use the **Fill Color** feature and choose an effect or color that looks good – a brick pattern is very appropriate. Draw some square windows and a door on the lower level. For 25-30 mm figures, standard office windows should be roughly ¾" tall by 1" wide; doors should be about 1 ½" tall by about 1" wide (twice as wide for a double-door). For multi-storey buildings, windows should have roughly 1" between the top of the lower window and the bottom of the upper window. Use the **Fill Color** tool and choose an appropriate color or effect for your window (pale blue works well, but some office buildings have exotic tinting on their windows that makes them look silver, red, or gold.

Print this page four times (one for each side of a four-corner building). Black and white printers work just fine, but if you have access to a color printer, I can't recommend them enough! Now glue or tape your walls to your box and then trim off any extra paper along the edges. If you like, you can print signs to fasten to the outside of your buildings (use tape or better yet, blue-tac). What you use as a bank this week might be a pawnshop, diner, or office building next week.

A cardboard box makes a terrific bank building!

Total outlay of the street scene: $17 – and you can use the cars, trees, and buildings any time you run a combat on the city streets!

Battle in the street!

Part Two: Harlequin's Fun House

For the second part of our battle, the heroes have tracked Black Harlequin back to his warehouse lair, where he has a trap laid out just for them…

Again, start with some newsprint to use as the base. Draw the rough outline of both the interior and the immediate exterior of the warehouse (a few meters outside the warehouse, just in case Knockback blows somebody through a wall).

Cost: Nothing, since we've still got plenty of newsprint from our previous battle.

Black Harlequin's base wouldn't look right without a few bizarre but non-functional toys and strange machines lying around. First, we'll need some common household objects. Take a few Pringles cans, Coffee cans, or round oatmeal boxes (make sure they're empty first!) and clean them thoroughly. Once they're dry, take them outside, set them on some old newspapers, and then cover them with a nice, heavy layer of white, black, or gray primer (white will probably be best, considering our next step). You'll want to try to obscure the label of the cans as best as you can, so they don't show through the paint.

Once that's completely dry, it's time to go crazy! Spray paint them any color you like, the more gaudy the better! Blues, reds, pinks, black and white – mix and match your colors to make a hodgepodge of freaky weirdness. Note: you'll probably want to wait until one color dries before adding the next. Sometimes different paints react strangely to one another.

If you're feeling ambitious, find a few large pictures of clowns, cut them out, and glue them to the fully-dry cans. Children's books are a good source of clown pictures (pick some up for cheap at the local used book or second-hand store), and you can find some pretty darned scary clown pictures on the Internet (keeping in mind applicable copyright laws, of course).

Insane Clown Towers made from a couple of empty Pringles cans

Cost: $3 for three cans of cheap spray paint from the hardware store.

Since it's a warehouse, we'll need to dress it up a little with some boxes and barrels. A quick trip down to one of the "big box" hobby stores (like Michael's or Hobby Lobby) and a look through their dollhouse accessories and unfinished wood section nets us a plastic bag of tiny barrels and a bag of small boxes for a buck apiece – plenty of miscellaneous junk for the heroes to toss around. You can paint them if you like, but that's not strictly necessary at this stage.

A bag of small boxes (unfinished) and small barrels (painted)

Cost: $2, and once again we've got items we'll be able to use over and over again.

Now for Black Harlequin's murderous toys. I picked up a bag of unpainted wooden chess pieces at the craft store for $3 (alternately, I could have bought an inexpensive plastic chess & checkers set at the toy store for $5, but I like making my own toys!).

Luckily, I've still got some red and black spray paint left over from the Harlequin's towers, so it doesn't take much effort to paint half the chess pieces black and the other half red.

Black Harlequin's Murderous Chessmen

Cost: $3, and I've got a handsome wooden chess set to show off to my chess-playing friends when they come over!

Conclusion

So there you have it – two complete champions battlefields for only $25, with enough parts to mix and match and hold dozens more battles. The whole thing took about a day to put together – I spent the morning shopping, and spent the afternoon completing the scenery (most of which was spent waiting for the paint to dry).

And just in case you want to run this scenario in your own campaign, here's a few starters to help – an example of how to construct a building (suitable for printing), and character sheets for Black Harlequin's Murderous Chessmen!

Battle in Black Harlequin's Secret Lair!

Black Harlequin's Murderous Chessmen

The Black Harlequin created a set of highly advanced artificially intelligent robots in order to lay a trap for the heroes. Each one has been programmed with a rudimentary personality, though they are not by any means truly sentient beings. The Chessmen are Harlequin's current favorite toys, and he will be very upset if they get destroyed, petulantly insisting the heroes are "not playing nice" and they "shouldn't be breaking other peoples' things."

The Chessmen themselves are stone cold killers, and will do anything to defeat their foes. They are programmed to work together as a team, supplementing one another's abilities and using their foes' weaknesses against them. They are not sentimental and do not require one another to work; if one of the Chessmen is destroyed, the others continue functioning without a hitch. However, the Chessmen are programmed to protect Black Harlequin over all, so if he is hurt they will all immediately rush to his defense.

Knight

Personality/Motivation: Black Harlequin programmed the Knight to be the chessmen's jester. It is as hyperactive as a child on a sugar rush, racing around the battlefield, cracking lame jokes from its limited repertoire, and blasting anyone within reach.

Powers/Tactics: The Knight is not one for subtlety. It races around on its high-speed hover unit, breathing fire on anything and everything in its path. It tries not to hit its own team, but it doesn't have the least bit of concern for property damage – in fact, the Knight loves burning things; the more fires, the better!

Quote: "Hot enough for you? Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!"

Appearance: The Knight looks like a gigantic, stylized, red horse's head. It stands about 6 feet tall, hovering over the ground on its gravitic lifting units. It speaks in a high-pitched, excited-sounding robotic voice.

Knight

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	150 kg; 2½d6 HTH [1]
26	DEX	48	12-	OCV: 9/DCV: 9
20	CON	20	13-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll: 11-
0	EGO	0	—	ECV: N/A
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
10	COM	0	11-	
5	PD	12		Total: 8 PD (3 rPD)
5	ED	11		Total: 8 ED (3 rED)
6	SPD	24		Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
7	REC	0		
56	END	8		
—	STUN	—		

Total Characteristics Cost: 126

Movement: Running: 12"/24"
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
50	*Red Knight's Firepower:* Multipower, 50-point Reserve	–
5	1) *Fire Blast:* EB 10d6	5
3	2) *Fiery Breath:* EB 5d6; Area Of Effect (6" Cone, +1), No Range (-½)	5
45	*Robotic Body:* Takes No STUN	0
27	*Armored Construction:* Armor (3 PD/ 3 ED)	0
42	*Robot:* Life Support (Safe in Heat, Cold, Vacuum, Pressure, and Radiation; Self-Contained Breathing, Does Not Sleep, Immunity to all Terrestrial Diseases and Poisons)	0
12	*Really Fast:* Running +6" (12" Total)	2
	Skills	
2	+1 with Fire Blast	
3	Teamwork 11-	

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 189

Total Cost: 315

200+ Disadvantages

25	Distinct Features: Giant Chesspiece (Not Concealable, Extreme Fear)
25	Physical Limitation: No Arms (All the Time, Fully)
15	Physical Limitation: Machine Intelligence (Frequently, Greatly)
5	Physical Limitation: Cannot Jump (Infrequently, Slightly)
20	Psychological Limitation: Must Protect Black Harlequin (Common, Total)
10	Psychological Limitation: Wild and Excitable (Common, Moderate)
15	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 315

King

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	150 kg; 2½d6 HTH [1]
13	DEX	9	12-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
20	CON	20	13-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll: 11-
0	EGO	0	—	ECV: N /A
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
10	COM	0	11-	
5	PD	12		Total: 10 PD (5 rPD)
5	ED	11		Total: 10 ED (5 rED)
5	SPD	27		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
7	REC	0		
52	END	6		
—	STUN	—		

Total Characteristics Cost: 88

Movement: Running: 3"/6"
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
70	*King's Mental Game:* Multipower, 70-point Reserve	–
6	1) *Synaptic Blast:* EB 5½d6, AVLD (Mental Defense, +1½); Limited Range (8", -¼)	6
5	2) *Synaptic Wave:* EB 4d6, AVLD (Mental Defense, +1½), Area Of Effect (3" Radius, +1); No Range (-½)	6
45	*Robotic Body:* Takes No STUN	0
45	*Armored Construction:* Armor (5 PD/5 ED)	0
42	*Robot:* Life Support (Safe in Heat, Cold, Vacuum, Pressure, and Radiation; Self-Contained Breathing, Does Not Sleep, Immunity to all Terrestrial Diseases and Poisons)	0
10	*Very Heavy:* Knockback Resistance -5"	0
-6	*Really Slow:* Running -3" (3" Total)	1

Skills

4	+2 with Ego Blast	
3	Tactics 11-	
3	Teamwork 11-	

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 227

Total Cost: 315

200+ Disadvantages

25	Distinct Features: Giant Chesspiece (Not Concealable, Extreme Fear)
25	Physical Limitation: No Arms (All the Time, Fully)
15	Physical Limitation: Machine Intelligence (Frequently, Greatly)
5	Physical Limitation: Cannot Jump (Infrequently, Slightly)
20	Psychological Limitation: Must Protect Black Harlequin (Common, Total)
10	Psychological Limitation: Coldly Calculating (Common, Moderate)
15	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 300

Personality/Motivation: The King has a coldly calculating personality. It carefully looks for an advantage in combat, and is always ready to exploit it.

Powers/Tactics: When combat begins, the King barks orders to the other chesspieces in a cold, metallic voice; however, this is a red herring. The King is not the most important piece on the battlefield, and it does not control the other chessmen. If the King is destroyed, the other pieces continue to fight as if nothing happened. Black Harlequin planned this as a little practical joke – if the heroes focus their attacks on one piece in the hopes of winning the fight quickly, they're in for a rude surprise! The King fires its Synaptic Bolt at anyone within 8"; it uses its Synaptic Wave when a group of heroes gets too close.

Quote: "Rook to Knight-7! Bishop to King-3! Knight takes Queen!"

Appearance: The King, like the other chessmen, looks like a gigantic chess piece. It is the largest piece, standing nearly 8 feet high. It is made of a material that looks like plastic, but is in reality harder than steel, and is painted in a bright, cheerful cherry red color. Its voice is loud, deep, and coldly mechanical. The King is one of the slower pieces, hovering a few inches over the ground using powerful gravitic lifting units implanted in its base.

Rook

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	150 kg; 2½d6 HTH [1]
13	DEX	9	12-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
20	CON	20	13-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll: 11-
0	EGO	0	—	ECV: N/A
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
10	COM	0	11-	
5	PD	12		Total: 13 PD (8 rPD)
5	ED	11		Total: 13 ED (8 rED)
4	SPD	17		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
7	REC	0		
54	END	7		
—	STUN	—		

Total Characteristics Cost: 79

Movement: Running: 1"/2"
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
50	*Black Rook's Cannonade:* Multipower, 50-point Reserve	–
5	1) *Cannonfire:* EB 10d6	5
5	2) *Cannon Volley:* EB 6d6+1; Autofire (5 Shots, +½)	5
45	*Robotic Body:* Takes No STUN	0
72	*Armored Construction:* Armor (8 PD/ 8 ED)	0
42	*Robot:* Life Support (Safe in Heat, Cold, Vacuum, Pressure, and Radiation; Self-Contained Breathing, Does Not Sleep, Immunity to all Terrestrial Diseases and Poisons)	0
-10	*Nearly Immobile:* Running -5" (1" Total)	

Skills

9	+3 with Cannonade	
3	Teamwork 11-	

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 221

Total Cost: 300

200+ Disadvantages

25	Distinct Features: Giant Chesspiece (Not Concealable, Extreme Fear)
25	Physical Limitation: No Arms (All the Time, Fully)
15	Physical Limitation: Machine Intelligence (Frequently, Greatly)
5	Physical Limitation: Cannot Jump (Infrequently, Slightly)
20	Psychological Limitation: Must Protect Black Harlequin (Common, Total)
10	Psychological Limitation: Wicked and Sadistic (Common, Moderate)

Total Disadvantage Points: 300

Personality/Motivation: The Black Rook is the cruelest of the Chessmen (and not surprisingly, Black Harlequin's favorite). It delights (if a machine can indeed "delight") in mayhem and pain, and takes special pleasure in attacking foes unable to defend themselves.

Powers/Tactics: The Rook prefers to set itself up in an advantageous position before combat begins, and then lay down a withering amount of firepower at its foes. If a foe has been immobilized or Stunned, the Rook uses its Cannon Volley to blast them to oblivion.

Quote: "Come about, and prepare to be blasted…"

Appearance: The Rook is a massive, round castle that appears to be made of shiny black plastic. It stands about 7 feet tall and about 4 feet wide. Though it has gravitic levitation units like the other chessmen, the Rook is so heavily armored that it can barely move. It speaks in a dry, whispery, mechanical voice.

Bishop

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	150 kg; 2½d6 HTH [1]
18	DEX	24	12-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
20	CON	20	13-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll: 11-
0	EGO	0	—	ECV: N/A
25	PRE	15	11-	PRE Attack: 5d6
10	COM	0	11-	
5	PD	12		Total: 8 PD (3 rPD)
5	ED	11		Total: 8 ED (3 rED)
5	SPD	22		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
7	REC	0		
52	END	6		
—	STUN	—		

Total Characteristics Cost: 113

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Swimming: 2"/4"

Cost	Powers	END
60	*Black Bishop's Soothing Bells:* Multipower, 60-point Reserve	–
6	*Weaken Resolve:* Drain EGO 4d6, Ranged (+½)	6
4	*Cause Panic:* Drain PRE 3d6; Area Of Effect (6" Cone, +1); No Range (-½)	6
45	*Robotic Body:* Takes No STUN	0
27	*Armored Construction:* Armor (3 PD/ 3 ED)	0
42	*Robot:* Life Support (Safe in Heat, Cold, Vacuum, Pressure, and Radiation; Self-Contained Breathing, Does Not Sleep, Immunity to all Terrestrial Diseases and Poisons)	0
	Skills	
3	Teamwork 11-	

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 187

Total Cost: 300

200+ Disadvantages
25	Distinct Features: Giant Chesspiece (Not Concealable, Extreme Fear)	
25	Physical Limitation: No Arms (All the Time, Fully)	
15	Physical Limitation: Machine Intelligence (Frequently, Greatly)	
5	Physical Limitation: Cannot Jump (Infrequently, Slightly)	
20	Psychological Limitation: Must Protect Black Harlequin (Common, Total)	
10	Psychological Limitation: Concerned and Sympathetic (Common, Moderate)	
15	Experience Points	

Total Disadvantage Points: 315

Personality/Motivation: The Bishop is concerned and sympathetic with all living things… in its own twisted way. It believes life is a burden, one that is easy to lay aside. If only people would understand that death is a release from the world's pains and not something to be feared. Luckily, the Bishop and its fellow Chessmen are here to help people escape the drudgery of this world…

Powers/Tactics: The sound of the Bishop's bells removes its foes' will to fight, convincing them to lie down and submit to the inevitable. The Bishop works closely with the King, using its Weaken Resolve power to augment the King's Synaptic Blast.

Quote: "My son, you appear to be losing your will to fight. It's all right; just surrender and all your troubles will soon be over."

Appearance: The Bishop, like the other Chessmen, appears to be a huge, black plastic chess piece. It stands about 7' tall and moves via the gravitic units built into its base. The Bishop has a calm, melodious, soothing voice – very unlike the mechanical voices of its fellow Chessmen.

The Whole Package by D.T. Butchino

Movies have done a lot to change the perspective of what a hero can do. Unlike the heroes of old, the line between impossible and probable fades in modern cinema, allowing action heroes to do incredible feats of heroism. The following package deals allow players and GMs to add some of their favorite heroes to their *Champions* or *Dark Champions* campaigns.

Everyman Hero

An Everyman Hero is someone who, out of necessity, becomes a hero. This could technically be anyone that's encountered on the street, though it's commonly a drifter of some sort in the cinema. Some wander into town because they know that something's wrong, while others just stumble into the thick of trouble. Whatever way it may be, the everyman hero is someone that everyone can relate to, giving him impact when he overcomes the challenge he faces.

Typical Goals and Motivations: Unlike most heroes, everyman heroes always seem to be in the right place at the wrong time. Whether it is a mystical beat-down in Chinatown, terrorists attempting to take over your small town, or aliens invading a major city through subterfuge, the everyman hero tends to find his way into the middle of things. Although an average Joe by nature, the everyman's knack for heroism is the thing that separates him from the rest of the mundane. No matter the odds, he'll always attempt to save innocents, disarm the bomb or stop whatever evil is around him.

Typical Abilities: Though often thought of as a normal guy, the everyman hero has made subconscious choices throughout his life to ensure that he can be a hero when needed. For example, most heroes of this vein choose a mobile base of operations, allowing them to travel around the nation, if not the world, when needed. This mobile life is what tends to get them into various predicaments, often by accident. Because of this life, they often pick up skills in some combat, whether guns, melee weapons, or a form of martial arts, and some ability to talk to people, frequently over a CB radio.

Suggested Disadvantages: Wherever he goes, the everyman hero tends to get into a fight, either to save face because of something he accidentally did or to save someone else. Because of this, the Unluck Disadvantage is very appropriate for any hero of this type. Since he always seems to stir up trouble, he also tends to have a DNPC or two that he's helped in the past, and he might be Hunted by someone trying to avenge a misdeed of the hero.

Progression: If the everyman hero continues on the path of heroism, he could easily adapt another package in law enforcement or even medical care (like a paramedic). If he stays within his current vocation, the hero could improve his firearms skills, buying levels in their particular choice of gun, as well as pick up some martial arts if he doesn't already have some (or even improve upon the art they've chosen).

Quote: "Heck, if I can't save her, you'd better call the marines."

Examples: Ash, Jack Burton, Tom Cody, John McClane

EVERYMAN HERO	
Cost	**Ability**
3	+3 STR
6	+3 CON
5	+5 PRE
2	AK: Campaign City 11-
5	Combat Driving +1
3	Conversation
3	Mechanics
2	PS: Cab Driver 11-
2	TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
3	WF: Blades, Handguns, Shotguns
12	Choose 12 points from the following: Bribery, Bump of Direction, Electronics, Gambling, Interrogation, Languages, Martial Arts (Dirty Infighting and Commando Training are recommended), Persuasion, Stealth, Streetwise, Fearless
Val	**Disadvantages**
-15	DNPC: Girl in Trouble (Normal) 11-
-15	Hunted: Gang/Mob (As Pow, Harsh, NCI) 8-
-5	Unluck: 1d6
Total Cost of Package:	
Cost	**Options**
14	*Owns the Pink Slip:* 70-point Vehicle
9	*Skilled Combatant:* +3 Levels with Handguns
10	*Mascot:* 50-point Animal Follower

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artwork by D.T. Butchino

Ghost Hunter

A Ghost Hunter is someone that actively seeks out ghosts for a living. This could be a scholar that works within the system to do research, or an independent that works to prove the existence of the supernatural. Though often seen with many gizmos and gadgets that allow him to investigate the paranormal, it's the ghost hunter's courage that makes him a true hero.

Typical Goals and Motivations: There are many things that motivate a person down the path of hunting ghosts. Some study parapsychology as a scientist and want to quell curiosity in that field, while others are working through a past experiment. Though many ghost hunters want to study and examine the phenomena, there are a small percent that want to either destroy the ethereal or to find the source of their power and harness it for themselves.

Typical Abilities: Armed with a deductive mind and various pieces of equipment, a ghost hunter typically is skilled in the science of parapsychology, as well as small group of skills to compliment their chosen field. Being investigators of a sort, many ghost hunters have good conversation skills, as well as some skill in photography (as they tend to use both still and video cameras often) and operating various systems like surveillance boards and audio mixers.

Suggested Disadvantages: By nature, a ghost hunter should have the curious disadvantage. Those not falling in this category could easily adapt Skeptic or Disbeliever in lieu of not being inquisitive. Though parapsychology has had some moments in the sun, many ghost hunters are viewed as quacks or charlatans by various law enforcement agencies and media sources. This allows for a poor reputation on the hunter's end, but could also spawn some interesting adventures. Though they claim to find evidence of the paranormal, many hunters can claim they've seen it and rarely can prove what they have seen. This is often a form of Unluck for them, as they just can seem to get that one chance of capturing something on film.

For those ghost hunters that are less than reputable, perhaps they have such disadvantages as Hatred of Ghosts, Enraged when Ghosts are around or even a Vulnerability to PRE attacks by ghosts. In an odd instance, perhaps one of these hunters have done some heinous act to a spirit and it now haunts him, providing the character with a Hunted.

Progression: When the opportunity arises, ghost hunters are more than willing to investigate any spectral hauntings. But, in their off time, they often need a separate occupation to fund their studies. This would be a job that they perform during a work week, but would also provide them with a way to take a few days off when needed. Many ghost hunters have become professors, writers or even technicians, though there are others who work more mundane jobs such as mechanics or plumbers. As time goes on, most hunters will excel at their normal profession, but may also gain additional presence from dealing with the paranormal, as well as honing their trade skills as they get closer to discovering the truth.

Quote: "Interesting … there seems to be some orbs in this image."

Examples: Fred Jones, Kalina Oretzia, Ray Stanz

GHOST HUNTER HERO	
Cost	**Ability**
2	+2 INT
6	+3 EGO
3	+3 PRE
3	Conversation
3	Deduction
3	KS: The Paranormal (INT-based)
3	PS: Photography (INT-based)
3	Oratory
5	SS: Parapsychology +2 (INT-based)
3	Systems Operation
15	Choose 15 points from the following: Bribery, Bugging, Bureaucratics, Computer Programming, Cramming, Criminology, Cryptography, Electronics, Forgery, Interrogation, Inventor, Paramedics, Shadowing, Transport Familiarity, Fearless
Val	**Disadvantages**
-15	Psych Lim: Curious (Common, Strong)
-5	Reputation: Charlatan 8-
-5	Unluck: 1d6
Total Cost of Package: 24	
Cost	**Options**
20	*Tenure:* Membership (College Faculty) and Contact (College of Employment) 8-
15	*Spectral Mascot:* 75-point Ghost Follower

Pro Wrestler

Unlike a boxer or martial artist, Pro Wrestlers have to train both their body and minds to handle the rigors of the life they've chosen. One part professional fighter and one part media star, many professional wrestlers are trained in making their fights look awe-inspiring and real. This translates well into a hero or villain, as many movies that use the wrestlers in such roles have proven.

Typical Goals and Motivations: While in the ring, a pro-wrestler's persona can take on many different motivations, often changing as the story requires. But in reality, most pro-wrestlers are in the ring for their moment of glory and for the cash that's involved. This is why they look for contracts and furthering their career so often, opting for movie or book deals when they can, for it's only a matter of time before their character's retired and they're doing talk shows or working as security for a stadium.

Typical Abilities: Though often accused of being fakes, pro-wrestlers are quite strong and know how to fight. That being said, they also know how to fake a fall and how to fight without hurting someone. For the most part, their in-character fighting is often represented with the Acting skill and KS: Mat Etiquette, though there are often times that they use an actual martial art as well, but pull their strength, allowing the maneuver to look fairly real, but to do as little damage as possible. Outside the ring, many wrestlers have good people skills, allowing them to talk to their fans and on various talk shows.

Suggested Disadvantages: While in-character, many pro-wrestlers gain a rep for being a "good guy" or a "bad guy," no matter how they may be in real life. Being a "bad guy" can be quite the disadvantage when not in the ring, as many diehard fans sometimes don't separate the line between in-character and out of character. Because of the nature of the business, many wrestlers also gain rivals within the organization, especially when you make it to the "big time," especially those that have tasted the limelight and are slowly being forced to step down.

Progression: While most pro wrestlers have a media life of three to four years, a handful of talented wrestlers can sometimes ride the fame train for longer. In game terms, this would be increasing the character's Acting, Knowledge Skills, and Combat Levels to a point where the character excels in what he does. Many wrestlers also begin to understand the intricacies of the industry they work in, gaining skill levels in KS: Wrestling Industry, as well as possibly gaining a PS: Entertainment Law.

Quote: "Can you feel the pain? Oh, Yeah!"

Examples: Triple H, The Rock, "Stone Cold" Steve Austin

PRO WRESTLER HERO	
Cost	**Ability**
6	+6 STR
4	+2 CON
3	+3 PRE
3	Acrobatics
3	Acting
3	Breakfall
3	Climbing
3	Conversation
2	KS: Mat Etiquette 11-
2	KS: Wrestling Industry 11-
15	Choose 15 points of Professional Wrestling Maneuvers (or other Martial Art with GM's Permission)
1	Fam: Paramedic 8-
3	PS: Pro Wrestler (PRE-Based)
10	Choose 10 points from the following: Defense Maneuver, Combat Levels, Disguise, Gambling, Teamwork, WF: Homemade Weapons, Reputation, Rapid Healing, Simulate Death
Val	**Disadvantages**
-15	Psych Lim: Glory Hound (Com, Strong)
-5	Rivalry: Fellow Wrestler (As Pow, Humiliate)

Total Cost of Package: 41

Cost Options
-10	*Plays a Villain:* Reputation: "Bad Guy" 8-, Extreme
15	*Special Move:* +3d6 HA; HA Lim (-½), Requires a PS: Pro Wrestler Roll (-½)
-15	*Masked Wrestler:* Social Limitation: Secret Identity

Sensitive

Though often called "gifted" by most, a Sensitive has special abilities that allow him to sense spirits, see into another time and place, or a combination of several abilities. How he uses these abilities is what defines him as a hero, as most cinematic sensitives either choose or are chosen to use their powers for the benefit of mankind. Though typically seen as a young child or slightly fragile adult, some sensitives are in peak shape in many movies.

Typical Goals and Motivations: Though usually depicted as fairly ordinary people, Sensitives have a special gift that they tend to use for good. Why they do it usually falls under a good sense of responsibility, though there are some instances that they're forced, by their power, to do good. Often a sensitive will seek out police or other law enforcement to help with a case involving one of their visions, while in other circumstances they're approached to help stumped officers find a clue.

Typical Abilities: A sensitive usually has some kind of psychic ability that allows him to either sense something that's not apparent to the naked eye or to see into a span of space not perceived by less gifted people. In a cinematic sense, many sensitives are fairly ordinary people that have been given an extraordinary gift. Because of this, they tend to have fairly normal skills with perhaps a bit of a slant towards investigations due to their visions.

Suggested Disadvantages: Though ordinary in many ways, most cinematic sensitives have a drive to help others by using their gifts. Whether delivering a message from a dead relative or acting as a seer for the police, the sensitive will go out of their way to help someone. Unfortunately, though they tend to help people, most of the public will often label the psychic a fraud or a kook until he proves himself (as well as buy off the Reputation Disadvantage).

Progression: Many sensitives live their lives as they always have, perhaps increasing some of their professional skills or maybe gaining a few extra levels with their gift. In some instances, a sensitive could go on to a law enforcement or private investigation career, marketing his gift to help a greater amount of people. In rare cases, a few individuals even go completely public and work towards media, dressing their gift in a television show.

Quote: "Your dad sent me… yes, I know he died ten years ago…."

Examples: Cole Sear, Tangina Barrons, Johnny Smith

SENSITIVE HERO	
Cost	**Ability**
6	+3 EGO
3	+3 PRE
20	20 points of psychic abilities
2	AK: Home Town
3	Conversation
3	Deduction
3	Oratory
2	PS: Choose 1 Profession
5	Sensitive +1 (EGO-based)
Val	**Disadvantages**
-15	Psychological Limitation: Driven to Help Others (Common, Strong)
-10	Reputation: Fraud 11-

Total Cost of Package: 22

Cost Options

6	*I See Dead People:* Contact (Useful Skills or resources, Good Relationship, Spirit Contact x2) 8-
-15	Psychological Limitation: Resents Gifts (Common, Strong)

Throttle Jockey

Some people drive and some people drive well. Throttle Jockeys surpass both of those types of people in both skill and style. One part suave and one part maniac, jockeys are seen by some as a menace and hotshot; while by others they are revered and worshipped. In either case, many movies portray a throttle jockey as an unlikely hero, usually forced into the role or taking the role as nothing more than a thrill, only to learn later of the good they've done.

Typical Goals and Motivations: People normally drive along in their lives much like ants marching to their anthill. Throttle jockeys, on the other hand, are the opposite. Blowing past the mundane fifty-five miles per hour, the jockey is addicted to speed and will do anything, go anywhere, or drive anything to achieve their ideal velocity.

Typical Abilities: Throttle jockeys know how to drive like no one else, making their cars or bikes a natural extension of themselves. This allows a jockey to do things that seem foolhardy and almost impossible to the ordinary eye. The obvious skills that have to be chosen are Combat Driving and a wide array of Transport Familiarities. Beyond those, it becomes more about the character's style and attitude when out of the car. Most jockeys understand how a car works, so Mechanics is an option, as is a certain sex appeal that comes with driving slick cars, so Persuasion and Seduction could easily be considered.

Suggested Disadvantages: Though typically seen as cocky, many throttle jockeys have an honest addiction to fast things: fast cars, fast women, and fast money. Because of this, they have many options for Psychological Limitations. Typically, these include: addicted to speed, greedy, and lecherous. Other options are being Enraged when their car is scratched, a Distinctive Feature that has to do with their style, and even DNPCs that revolve around their vehicle.

Progression: Depending on his goals as a throttle jockey, the character could go in many directions. Some move on to criminal pursuits, while others have worked in law-enforcement. In espionage-based campaigns, a throttle jockey would be most useful as a transporter, helping the other spies to get from point A to point B. In a criminal venue, the jockey could become a driver for a mob boss or even a wheelman for a gang of armed crooks. A few actually stay on the road as a throttle jockey, racing in illegal competitions around the world.

Quote: "Woo Hoo!"

Examples: Randall 'Memphis' Raines, Lt. Frank Bullit, Bo Darville

THROTTLE JOCKEY HERO	
Cost	**Ability**
6	+2 DEX
10	+1 SPD
7	Combat Driving +2
3	Mechanics
2	Navigation (Land)
3	Persuasion
3	Seduction
3	Bump of Direction
3	TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
Val	**Disadvantages**
-10	Psychological Limitation: Addicted to Speed (Common, Moderate)
-5	Reputation: Hotshot 8-
Total Cost of Package: 25	
Cost	**Options**
-15	*Fugitive:* Hunted by Police 8- (Mo Pow, Capture)
3	*Armed and Dangerous:* WF: Small Arms & Vehicle Weapons
24	*Sweet Ride:* 120-point Car
24	*Master of Bike-Fu:* 24 points of Bike-Fu Maneuvers

Bike Fu

Bike Fu is the art of melee combat while riding a motorcycle. A staple in Hong Kong cinema and anime, the bike fu master is able to use his motorcycle as an extension of his own body, allowing him to use various maneuvers to perform remarkable combat maneuvers. Characters may also use this style with blunt weapons or a sword (such as a katana).

BIKE FU NOTES

Optional Rules: Any of the Bike Fu maneuvers require a Combat Driving roll with the modifier equal to the maneuver's OCV modifier.

BIKE FU MANEUVERS; Used with Motorcycle; Vehicular Weapon Element is free

Maneuver	Phs	Pts	OCV	DCV	Damage/Effect
Lancing	½	4	+1	-1	STR + v/5, Target Falls
Swerve	½	3	+0	+3	Dodge, Abort
Roundhouse Wheel	½	4	-2	-2	STR + v/3, Both Fall, FMove
Dust Revving	½	3	+1	+1	1" Darkness (Normal Sight)
Wheel Burn	½	7	-2	-2	1d6 HKA (4 DC), Target Falls
Pin	½	3	-1	-1	Grab Two Limbs, +10 STR to Hold

Skills
Breakfall
Combat Driving
KS: Bike Fu
TF: Two-Wheeled Motorized Vehicles

Elements
Weapons   +1 Use Art with Swords
           +1 Use Art with Blunt Objects

Everyman Hero

Champions Crossword by Dave Mattingly

It's Curtains for Thee!

LAST ISSUE'S PUZZLE KEY

Here is the solution for the crossword puzzle from *Digital Hero #27*.

```
JAWA  IDES  ESL
INON  GIRO  NEO
TAKECOVER  RPD
   ARTE  ELATE
COBRA  SPRIG
ORO  FIFE  FEUD
ABORTTOADODGE
LISA  ORSO  BLT
    THEOC  ZAYIN
CHASM  OMEN
HUB  ADVANTAGE
ILL  IRED  IDOL
NAE  LYRE  COOK
```

ACROSS

1. British Columbian lake
5. Roleplay
8. HQs
12. Extra push
13. Space station
14. Despicable
15. Sports league
16. Good place for a haymaker
18. Life Support versus HEAT?
20. Cost per d6 of Ego Attack
21. Soldier of fortune
22. "What's the matter?"
25. Greek gulp
29. Dine elsewhere
30. Darkened
32. So far
33. How Freddy Foswell might cook out?
35. Naked Advantage?
37. Turned on
38. "Okay, see if you hit."
44. They prevent trickers
45. Biblical prophet
46. Idle comedian?
47. Tear
48. Close
49. Marinate
50. CIA Forerunner
51. Temp job, NASA-style

DOWN

1. "Well, whaddya know?"
2. Gym of song
3. In on
4. How Sir Giles dims his windows?
5. Seedy Idi
6. Show biz
7. Transferred, Yankee-like
8. Common brick quirk
9. Residue
10. Nile queen, to her friends
11. Prognosticator
17. Maim
19. Plenty, of yore
22. "Ain't _____ pair, Raggedy Man?"
23. Possesses
24. Luminary savior?
26. Made a Teamwork roll?
27. Zorro, slicing his logo
28. Lyric poem
31. Tire rod
34. Bueller
36. "The world's networking company"
38. Hwys
39. What Zorro leaves off
40. Jabba's prize
41. Psychic senses
42. Supercomputer
43. CBs, to CBers